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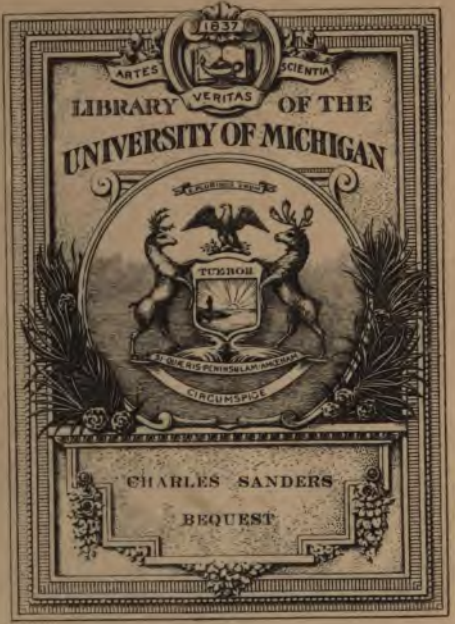

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MEMOIRS

OF

SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

WITH

A COLLECTION

OF HIS GENUINE

BON-MOTS, ANECDOTES, OPINIONS, &c.

MOSTLY ORIGINAL.

AND

THREE OF HIS DRAMATIC PIECES,

Not published in his Works.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

By WILLIAM COOKE, Esq.

"A merrier man
I never spent an hour's talk withal.
His eye begat occasion for his wit;
For every object that the one did catch,
The other turn'd to a mirth-moving jest."

SHAKSPEARE.

London:

PRINTED FOR RICHARD PHILLIPS,

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1805.

PRINTED BY JOYCE GOLD, SHOE LANE.

Bequest

MEMOIRS

OF

SAMUEL FOOTE.

REMARKS ON HIS PRIVATE AND PUBLIC CHARACTER.

FOOTE was in his person about the middle size, rather clumsily made; with a broad fleshy face, that would be reckoned both vulgar and unmeaning, but for a certain archness in his eye, which at once overcame all other appearances, and instantly proclaimed him the genuine humourist. There are several prints of him both in his dramatic and private character, none of which are unlike; but the most perfect is the French print published immediately after one of his trips from Paris, and which is prefixed to these Memoirs.

He married early in life, but had no

children by this union. His wife was a gentlewoman of Worcestershire, the choice of whom met with the approbation of his family. But a man of his volatile disposition was ill calculated for the sober pleasures of matrimony: she died, however, in good time for both parties; before age came on to incite a further distaste in her husband; and before (as might perhaps have been the case) he had disgraced himself by adding ill treatment to neglect*.

* The following curious circumstance took place soon after this marriage. He and his wife were invited by his father to spend a month with him in Cornwall, when, very much to their surprise, on the first night as they were going to bed, they were entertained with a concert of music, seemingly under their window, executed in a capital style. This lasted about twenty minutes. On relating the circumstance next morning to the farmer, and complimenting him upon his gallantry, he absolutely denied any knowledge of the affair and doubted the possibility of its occurring. The young couple, however, were positive as to what they had heard and our hero was so impressed by it, that he made a memorandum of the time, which afterwards proved not to be the very night of his uncle, Sir John Chicheley Goodere, being murdered by his unnatural brother.

Poore always asserted the fact of this occurrence with the greatest gravity of belief, though he could never account for it. One day, being asked whether

Like many other managers of a theatre, he had his amours; and by a connection of this sort he had two sons. One died before the father; the other, though left without any fortune, was taken under the protection of a friend (I believe, Mr. Jewel, the present treasurer of the Haymarket theatre), who humanely continued that protection to the death of his young ward.

Foote's mother, who brought a large fortune to her husband as heiress to the Goodere estates, was latterly, by a carelessness and dissipation so peculiar to this family, in a great measure a dependent on her son's bounty; as was also his brother, who was brought up to the church. To the latter he allowed sixty pounds a year, besides the freedom of his table and theatre; to the former a pension of one hundred pounds till her death, which happened some years before that of her son *.

he ought not to attribute it to a supernatural cause? he replied, "No; I never could bring my mind to that: but this I can tell you; it has made such an impressio upon me, that if I once thought so, I would not be of a convent a single day longer."

* Under one of her temporary embarrassments,

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In respect to his public conduct, his well-known character as a satirist, and a man of free discourse, subjected him to much misrepresentation. Judging of him by the supposed malice of dragging an individual before the tribunal of an audience, or by the exact propriety of a *bon-mot*, the world attached no small share of ill nature and profligacy to his character: though he undoubtedly may have thought that in the one respect he was benefiting society, in somewhat the same manner as a surgeon does who dissects a diseased subject for the purpose of promoting the general health of mankind; and

---

wrote the following laconic epistle to our hero; which, with his answer, exhibit no bad specimen of the thoughtless dispositions of the two characters:—

"DEAR SAM,

"I AM in prison for debt: come and assist your loving mother,

"E. FOOTE."

"DEAR MOTHER,

"SO am I; which prevents his duty being paid to his loving mother by her affectionate son,

"SAM. FOOTE."

"*P.S.* I have sent my attorney to assist you; in the *mean time let us* hope for better days."

that in the other, it was at least excusable to employ his wit and humour, merely to create an innocent laugh. The fact is, that although Foote was certainly far from holding out an example for unreserved imitation, either in the correctness of his morals, or the regularity of his habits, he was yet equally far from being systematically bad. The conscious superiority of great parts made him careless about the inferior decencies of life; and "the renown of being smart" induced him to say many things not at all prompted by his feelings. But his expressions were set against him, and his enemies made the most of them.

He left the University with a good share of classical knowledge, which he never lost sight of in the midst of his greatest dissipations; snatching occasional hours for not only reviewing his school reading, but also for perusing some of the best authors in French and English. This he continued to do through life; judging very properly, that the fame of mere conviviality goes no further than the temporary attachment of bottle companions, and is as easily

lost as acquired; while a superior knowledge gains respect and inward satisfaction. This was his pleasure and his pride; here he cultivated his taste, and enlarged the views of his comprehensive mind.

In the early part of his life he was what the world then called a fine gentleman: and in his morning rambles through the parks, at the Bedford, &c. he exhibited a full dress suit, bag wig and *solitaire*, sword, muff, rings, &c.; so that he was often taken for a foreigner. He was occasionally fond of dress to the last; but his taste in this was not so correct as in other matters: he was seldom wholly uniform; and took snuff in such quantities, as often rendered him a very slovenly *beau*. He lived much in taverns, and at public places, in the early part of his life; but when he became settled as manager of the Haymarket theatre, and his revenue assumed a more enlarged and permanent form, he resided regularly, when he wintered in London, in Suffolk-street; and in the summer almost constantly at North-end; where he kept up the pleasures of the table with great splendour and

hospitality. His company generally consisted of men of rank and fashion, some literary characters, and a selection from the stage.

In *this* scene he always acted to great advantage. Though he did not, like Lorenzo de Medici, arrange his guests at table according to the punctuality of their arrival, he placed them so as to show no marked distinction or superiority. Every body was talked to, and attended, in turn; every body was drawn into his best subject of conversation; and often the man of modesty, or of weaker powers, was supported by the well-timed and polite interference of the host. In short, he set every one at ease with himself, the better to enable him to please and be pleased.

In these exercises of hospitality he knew his own station perfectly well, and supported it with great propriety. He carved well, and expeditiously; and his table was covered, on such occasions, with every thing suitable to a man of taste and fashion:—two or three courses, a handsome dessert, French wines, &c. He added to these his best

treat, his own conversation: not only in the brilliancy of his wit, but also on the more solid topics of taste and literature. It was often astonishing to those who did not know the whole range of his mind, and who had only given him credit for mere humour, to see with what versatility he could turn from the broadest mirth to subjects of history, politics, and general learning. Even the subject of religion (the last which, from his giddy heedless conduct, he was suspected of understanding) he discussed with becoming gravity and knowledge; evincing a strong sense of the practical duties of moral life, as well as an intimate acquaintance even with the writings of the fathers, and the several branches of ecclesiastical history.

His more familiar days were passed with a few friends, and one or two needy actors or authors, who constantly hung upon him, and to whom he was kind in his purse, his table, and advice. Yet as "no man is a hero to his *valet-de-chambre*," so these intimates were witnesses to great occasional dejection of spirits. He would suddenly fall *from the height* of mirth to the lowest note

of "moping, musing melancholy;" then burst into a flood of tears, exclaiming, that "his follies had made him many enemies, and his extravagance would bring him to a workhouse!" But these seemed to be mere momentary fits of despondence, occasioned by a previous waste of animal spirits: as the first object of ridicule which presented itself, he instantly seized; and with a spring of fancy, that seemed to rebound in proportion as it had been compressed, he again blazed out in all his meridian brightness.

In his benevolence and charities he was liberal; and had always several poor pensioners on his list, besides his purse being ever open to occasional donations. He was likewise a very indulgent master to his servants. In his theatre he preserved the same kindness, not only in his general treatment of the performers, but in retaining those who lived long with him, merely from friendship, often when he had very little occasion for their services. Poor old Usher was one instance of this, among many others. This man could latterly do little in the line of his profession, but that little he did

decently; and Foote often said, "he kept him on purpose to show *the superior gentlemanly manners of the old school.*" Usher played with him till Foote relinquished the theatre; he then descended to the elder Colman as an *heir loom,* and from him to the present manager, in whose service he closed the last act of a long and irreproachable life.

In thus detailing the private life of Foote, we are almost naturally led to a comparison of him with Garrick. They were the two theatrical meteors of their day: both men of wit and education; both authors, managers, and actors; both objects that attracted the admiration of the public; and by this collision of characters they may perhaps better elucidate each other, than by an individual description.

Foote was by far the better scholar of the two: and to this superiority he added also a good taste, a warm imagination, a strong turn for mimicry, and a constant fresh supply of extensive occasional reading from the best authors of all descriptions. He could likewise apply all these advantages with

great readiness; so that either with his pen, or in conversation, he was never at a loss.

Garrick was no *Grecian*. Davies says of him, in his Memoirs, that "he had *once* made himself master of all the Greek words;" but admitting that he had retained them, what sort of a Greek scholar would *this* knowledge have made him? In respect to the Latin, he might, perhaps, have acquired some proficiency when he was under the care of Dr. Johnson at Litchfield; but Johnson afterwards said of him, "David has not Latin enough; he finds out the Latin by the meaning, rather than the meaning by the Latin." He was, however, tolerably conversant in the classics; a good Frenchman; and read and conversed occasionally in the Italian.—He also possessed a good taste, with a pleasing lively manner of delivery. The fact was, that Garrick's literary pursuits were in a great degree checked by the sudden influx of his fame and fortune; for when he became a manager, it happened of course, that from the care of a great theatre, from his own performances, and the attention which he paid to pecuniary concerns, he

had no time for the high and regular improvement of his mind: he saw a mass of wealth presenting itself before him, and he "*clutched*" it with a much more certain grasp than the air-drawn dagger of Macbeth; leaving at his death more than one hundred thousand pounds, with this *most affectionate* compliment to his relations, "that he knew of no friend out of their circle."

Though Foote was not deficient in paying his respects to men of rank and fashion, he never sought them with any kind of unbecoming eagerness, or made the least distinction at his table between them and the obscurest guest. When that table too was all in a roar, as it usually was, he never stopped the career of his *bon-mot* out of respect to persons; it as readily struck a noble duke as a poor player. His visitors knew the terms on which they met: some approved of them from the general love of wit and good humour, while others endured them in order the better to keep within his favour and friendship.

Garrick, on the contrary, was all submission in the presence of either a peer or a

poet; equally loth to offend the dignity of the one, or provoke the irritability of the other: hence he was, at times, too methodical in his conversation to admit of his mixing in "the feast of reason and the flow of soul." To his dependents and inferior players, however, he was indeed *king* DAVID, except when he had a mind to mortify them by means of one another. On such occasions he generally took up some of the lowest among them; whom he not only cast in the same scenes with himself, but frequently walked arm in arm with in the Green-room, and sometimes in his morning rambles about the streets.

In his domestic arrangements Garrick was uniform and respectable: a handsome house in town and country, carriages, servants, &c.; and when he gave grand entertainments, he saw some of the first company, for rank and abilities, in the kingdom. But in such meetings conversation generally partook more of a high-bred style, than the easy familiarity of a social party; except when Foote, Chase Price, Rigby, Fitzherbert, and others of this class were present. Then indeed the

pale of high breeding was instantly broken down; and wit, fun, and good humour, became the order of the day.

But fairly to taste the respective powers of these two distinguished characters, was to see them *pitted* together at the table of a third person, in the range of general and free conversation: a scene in which they often appeared, and where they both displayed powers which placed them so deservedly high on the scale of public importance.

The mind of Garrick,—strong in natural force, which was further aided by great professional knowledge, talents for mimicry, a wide range of good company, and much acuteness of observation,—afforded him innumerable topics of conversation, which he dilated upon in a very pleasing and agreeable manner: but this was in all cases regulated by, and made subordinate to, his deference for superiors in rank or station, and his great respect for the decorums of life. He dared not let his shaft fly with the freedom of Foote's, for fear of giving offence; and from *this cause has* probably often repressed those

coruscations of fancy, which would otherwise have shone with greater lustre. In fact, Garrick's chief excellence did not lie in the *reciprocity* of conversation; but in the narration of lively and agreeable anecdotes, humorous stories, &c.; drawing his knowledge, as it were, rather from an intellectual *reservoir* than a *spring*. Yet in these respects he was often so pleasing, so fanciful, and so characteristic, that it would be difficult to find a man who could make and leave a more favourable impression on his company.

Foote's conversation was of such a description, that "nought but itself could be its parallel." Teeming with fancy and various knowledge, fearless of consequences, and privileged in the character of a wit, he took his stand with confidence, and threw his shafts around him with the dexterity of a master, the first and the last of his own school. He was rapid, lucid, and exuberant; and his images of ridicule, and portraits of characters, were so strong, novel, and whimsical, that he carried the imagination of his hearers insensibly along with him. In short, Garrick's conversation was like a

gentle heat, that cheered and warmed; Foote's, a meteor that delighted by the splendour of its blaze.

Being (as is above remarked) a better scholar too than Garrick, he had a greater command of topics. He could turn "from gay to grave, from lively to severe," with facility, and discuss whatever subject occurred with much precision and classical authority, while upon all such matters Garrick seemed to argue rather cautiously, and took care never to go beyond his depth; sometimes contenting himself with the character of an humble listener, and at other times playing an under-part to Foote. But these condescensions did not always conciliate the esteem of our hero; who, perhaps, envying the great fortune, and still greater professional abilities of his rival, availed himself of the only superiority which he retained, and seldom failed to exercise this with an unsparing keenness, whenever an opportunity offered.

Upon the whole, it would be difficult to pair two such masters of conversation; *and they* were always considered in the

circles of those who ennobled rank and adorned literature. For though Foote had evidently the advantage in the bright and luminous parts, and raised the admiration of a louder laugh; Garrick gained a steadier approbation, and always excited a pleasing degree of mirth and inoffensive cheerfulness.

As an Actor,

Foote has been so much and so long praised, that it would be incurring some risk to differ in any degree from this general opinion. There are, however, some persons now living, who were reckoned good judges when the art of criticism stood upon much higher ground than at present, whose decision "overweighs a whole theatre of others;" and to such I appeal in not thinking him entitled to this general applause.

His first appearance upon any stage was, as has been before observed, in the character of *Othello;* perhaps the part, in the whole range of the drama, (if he properly estimated his own powers,) for which he was the least qualified. But, as was likewise remarked, *that* the inclination of a young man strongly

attached to pleasure, and educated in habits of gaiety, should wish to make his *debut* as a lover or a hero, was very natural, and that this wish should make him mistake or overlook the real turn of his own character was equally so. On the other hand, it is but doing him justice to say, that he was one of the first to see and correct his own error. The decided failure of his *Othello,* and one or two other parts in a similar line, soon showed him that "imperial Tragedy" must sit upon her throne alone; and that if she sometimes condescends to divide her power with Wit and Humour, it is by the *singular* bounty of nature, and should form no precedent for general expectation.

Having thus become conscious of his proper *forte,* he exerted it in those parts which he thought most suited to his genius. The principal of these were as follow: *Fondlewife,* in *The Old Bachelor; Sir Paul Pliant,* in *The Double Dealer; Ben,* in *Love for Love; Shylock,* in *The Merchant of Venice;* and *Bayes,* in *The Rehearsal;* besides the several principal characters which he afterwards performed in his own pieces.

In the first of these he had fortunately

remembered that great master of the old comic school, Colley Cibber; and from this source he availed himself of all those little touches and graces with which *he* embellished it. Hence he gained, and merited, much applause from the critics of that day. He sometimes, it is true, would diverge from his great exemplar; and though he often gained additional credit from taking this bye-road, yet in proportion as he was less *Cibberian,* he was thought, by the best judges, to be less natural.

He seemed to have no model for *Sir Paul Pliant* but himself. He was indeed sufficient in respect to the study and knowledge of it; but chastity of character was ever one of the most difficult points for him to hit, or at least to settle on. Other performers, whose judgment were not broken in upon by the exuberance of fancy, or the propelling influence of imagination, had only to copy the original, and as far as they could do that, they were satisfied: but Foote, being under no restraints of this kind, was so much of an original himself, that he was impatient of the fatigue of a copyist.

and when he once got the outline, he filled up the canvas himself,—not altogether with the appropriate costume of the character; but, what availed him more (not only in pleasing the greatest part of the audience, but often in seducing the best judges), his own irresistible humour and "precious foolery."

In tracing great objects to their original source, we not unfrequently find them to arise from trivial and incidental circumstances; and on this principle it is curious to observe, that it was partly his predilection for this part of *Sir Paul Pliant* that first led him to discover the seeds of original genius in a very young actress, who afterwards became one of the greatest ornaments of the comic theatre.

The lady we allude to, is the present Mrs. Abington. She was then just introduced on the stage; and had been, for her first summer excursion, acting at the Richmond Theatre. At that place Foote saw her in *Lady Pliant*; and was so unexpectedly charmed with her taste, humour, and fine conception of the part, that, after paying the highest compliments to her talents behind the scenes, he

immediately introduced her to Mr. Lacy, who engaged her for the next winter at Drury-lane.

When she made her first appearance here, she equally surprised Garrick; who, after a few trials, told her "it would be her own fault if she did not stand at the head of her profession." Her research, her taste, her assiduities, joined to her fine talents, verified this great master's prediction: for after her trip to Ireland (where the high patronage which she experienced there for several years called forth and fostered her talents), she returned to her old situation at Drury-lane Theatre, a finished actress; and continued there, and at Covent-garden, till she retired from the stage, equally the great object of comic attraction, and the arbitress of taste and of fashion*.

* On the retirement of Garrick from the stage, it was currently reported for some time that Mrs. Abington would retire likewise; which occasioned the following lines, supposed to be written by a very eminent lawyer of that day.

Scarce had our tears forgot to flow,
By Garrick's loss inspir'd,
When Fame, to second such a blow,
Said "Abington's retir'd."

Gloom'd

To pursue the progress of our hero's characters.—His *Ben* in *Love for Love*, though much followed for a time, was, perhaps, the worst of all his performances, except his *Othello*. It had none of the genuine *naïveté* and simple sprightliness of the sailor; and, as if afraid of doing too much (his general failing), here he did too little. A cotemporary writer (who, if unbiassed, was a competent judge of theatrical merit)* says, "it was as lifeless a lump of insipidity as I ever saw; he had not even his usual confidence in the part, but shrunk from it, as under a timid impression of not doing it proper justice." Yet such is the caprice of public taste, that his *Ben* was the great object of attraction for many nights in one season, and crowded boxes of beauty and elegance gave another proof how little fashionable criticism is to be relied on.

Gloom'd with the thought, Thalia mourn'd;
The Graces join'd her train;
And nought but sighs for sighs return'd
Were heard round Drury-lane.

But see! 'tis false; in Nature's style
She comes, by Fancy grac'd;
Again gives Comedy her smile,
And Fashion all her taste.

* Davis.

Before Macklin revived the part of *Shylock*, which was not many years antecedent to this period, it was generally played by a *comic* performer, who, doubtless, "gave it a spice of his quality." Whether Foote wished to revive the old practice, or thought he could do full justice to it in its present state of representation, is uncertain; he, however, in undertaking it, made little less than a total failure. The plodding Jew merchant, the specious friend, and inflexible creditor, were sarcely once discernible in his features, or in his acting: he now and then, it is true, attempted to follow the poet, but in vain; and finding he could not succeed in the serious, he turned to the favourite pursuit of his soul, the ludicrous:—here his triumph was infallible in his own opinion, and often in the opinion of his audience;

"While Common-sense stood trembling at the door."

The late Mrs. Clive had so poor an opinion of him in this part, that on being suddenly called to rehearsal for *Portia*, she asked, in her own coarse way, "Who is to play *Shylock*?"—"Mr. Foote, Madam," said Garrick (presenting him to

the same time).—"What, *you!*" looking contemptuously on him: "*you* play *Shylock* to my *Portia!* Oh! then I'm off;" and she was as good as her word; for she instantly quitted the theatre, and the play was obliged to be changed. Foote was so much abashed at this rebuff, that I believe he never afterwards performed this character before a London audience.

Thus far he has not appeared as the possessor of any valid claims to the unqualified praise which general report has transmitted to the present time; but he rises in our estimation when we are led to contemplate him in the part of *Bayes*, as well as in the various characters of his own pieces. In these last, particularly, the spirit of the author being transfused into the actor, it was necessarily to be expected that the representation should be given more correct and animated.

The original design of *The Rehearsal* was to expose the very absurd taste of the dramatic writers of those times, by alluding to various passages in their plays, and holding them out to the contempt and ridicule which they deserved. Those authors seem-

ed to have no other view than that of contributing to the pleasures of the day that was passing over them; and in order to effect this, they nourished the vicious taste of a debauched court, by rendering the stage (which ought to be a school of morality and *instructive* gaiety) a mere receptacle of profligacy, bombast, and novelty.

It is with some degree of pain that we are obliged to number in this list our great Dryden; or, as Pope affectionately calls him upon this occasion, "unhappy Dryden!" who was so far from being exempted from this disgrace, that he, in a great degree, contributed to it in most of his dramatic pieces, more particularly in his two parts of *The Conquest of Granada*. A better account of these pieces cannot be given than in the following very judicious and spirited criticism of Dr. Johnson.

"These two plays are written with a seeming determination to glut the public with dramatic wonders; to exhibit in
est elevation a theatrical mete
ble love and impossible va
no room for a wilder flig

gance of posterity. All the rays of romantic heat, whether amorous or warlike, glow in *Almanzor*, by a kind of concentration. He is above all law, exempted from all restraints: he ranges the world at will, and governs wherever he appears: he fights without inquiring the cause, and loves in spite of the obligations of justice, of rejection by his mistress, and of prohibition from the dead.

"Yet the scenes are, for the most part, delightful. They exhibit a kind of illustrious depravity, and majestic madness; such as, if it is sometimes despised, is often reverenced, and in which the ridiculous is mingled with the astonishing."

The hero of *The Rehearsal* was originally intended for Sir Robert Howard (a celebrated dramatic writer, and the brother-in-law of Dryden), under the name of *Bilboa*; in which part his writings, as well as those of Sir William D'Avenant and others, are exposed in the most poignant satire. In the original, the character of *Bilboa* was partly personal, perhaps alternately alluding to Howard and to D'Avenant; but when Dry-

den became poet-laureat, the author hitched him into the place of D'Avenant under the title of *Bayes*, in which many of the little peculiarities of his dress and manners are said to be recorded.

On the death of Dryden, *Bayes* seems to have lost his *personality*; and to be only considered as an affected poet, enamoured of his own writings. The very dress of the character no longer became prescribed, and every actor was at liberty to represent him as he and the manager could agree.

The original actor of *Bayes* was John Lacy, whom old Downs, the prompter, calls "a man of infinite comic humour;" but how he dressed the part is now uncertain. Yet, as Dryden, when full dressed, generally appeared in black velvet, he probably imitated the original in this respect. The immediate successor of Lacy is unknown. The next was the celebrated Joe Haines; but his mode of dressing the character is likewise unrecorded. Dick Estcourt, the celebrated mimic, appeared in *Bayes* as *the smart genteel coxcomb of the day*; in which he was followed by Cibber, and at

first by Garrick, who soon however altered it to a dress which he thought more suitable to the pedantic conceit and solemnity of the dramatic coxcomb: he wore a shabby old-fashioned black coat, a small hat, a long flowing brown wig, high topped shoes with red heels, a mourning sword, scarlet rolled-up stockings, and cut-fingered gloves.

These particulars are here mentioned partly to satisfy theatrical curiosity in matters that are sometimes thought too unimportant to be recorded, and to show that Foote, neither in the *personal* character, nor in the *dress* of *Bayes*, was bound to any individual imitation; though his own good sense led him to copy Garrick in the latter, as seemingly more correspondent with the original design of the character. With this single adopted restriction in point of dress, he had the authority of his predecessors for adding what new superstructure he pleased to the original building; and in this respect his strong sense, and the rapidity of his imagination, gave him great advantages. The public transactions—the flying follies of the day—the debates in parliament—

the absurdities of play-writers, politicians, and players—all came under the lash of his wit and humour: he seized on every thing, and every body, that could furnish merriment for the evening; and all seemed pleased and delighted with the agreeable *melange*. Garrick's *Bayes*, humorous and mellow, excited the smile of approbation; Foote's, the irresistible laugh which carried all before it.

As an actor on his own ground (that is, in the performance of his own dramatic writings) his merit still rises higher; for here at least he must be acknowledged to have understood his author thoroughly, which is no trifling assistance towards an appropriate representation. It is therefore but justice to say, that I believe there was no actor of his time who could support the characters which he assigned himself with such general pleasantry and richness of colouring. At the same time, I must protest against one species of his theatrical fame, even in these parts; as I never thought him that correct and chaste mimic of the individual, which the generality of the world allowed

him, and on which so much of his stage reputation was founded.

If we understand by *mimicry* a close imitation of the person, voice, manners, &c. of the particular person to be represented, Foote most certainly could not strictly be held (if we except the single character of *Aprice*) a chaste mimic. His person, from its original clumsiness, and the natural broad unmeaning stare in his face, even with all the advantages of his eye, could scarcely be brought to assimilate exactly to any one character. His tones too were nasal and sharp, so that he had no compass in his voice to admit of much variety; while his address, which was never pliable or disengaged, and was rendered much worse by the loss of his leg, was another drawback upon his talents, and completed his impossibility of rendering a very close imitation.

Estcourt, one of his predecessors in the part of *Bayes*, was what may be called a real mimic; uniting all the powers of his art so exactly, as almost to identify the character which he intended to represent. Sir Richard Steele, who knew and loved this

performer, tells the following anecdote of him; which at once shows the extent of his powers, and an example of the never-failing irritation which similar powers create in the breast of the person who is thus rendered the object of their ridicule:

"Secretary Craggs, when a young man, in company with some others, introduced his friend Dick Estcourt to Sir Godfrey Kneller, as a person who could give such a representation of many of his friends as would surprise him. Estcourt, on this, immediately began; and mimicked Lords Somers, Halifax, Godolphin, and others of his acquaintance, so very exactly, that the knight (though otherwise a grave character) was in convulsions of laughter. While all this was at other people's expense, it was very entertaining; but when Craggs gave him the wink, and he began upon Sir Godfrey himself, he instantly sprung from his chair in the greatest passion imaginable, exclaiming, 'Nay, nay; there you are out, young man! that's not me—that's not me!"

The best and most impartial critics of

Foote's time have warranted my opinion of him on this subject; such as Messrs. Murphy, Chase Price, Fitzherbert, Drs. Goldsmith and Johnson, &c. The last of these particularly (who, though he did not like the man, yet respected his own judgment too highly to yield to prejudice) has said of him, "that although he had wit, fertility, and a great variety of humour to bear upon the parts he was to perform, yet he was not a chaste mimic."

How then are we to account for that high reputation which he attained and supported in this line of performance, through life? The answer is easy: by one of those deceptions which are not unfrequently practised with success on those whose education and researches preclude them from discriminating the genuine from the counterfeit. Foote had a quick and discerning eye towards the follies and vices of mankind; and with one view caught the leading feature of the character he wanted to expose, with some remarkable incident of *his* life. The union of these formed his basis, and his own powers

of humour did all the rest. The audience were, at the same time, in the secret against themselves: for the name of the person intended to be mimicked, and the plot, being previously insinuated into the boxes, they were prepared for the likeness; and finding a strong *caricature* suddenly thrust upon them, tricked out with all the glare of colouring, they were either too much prepossessed, or had too little judgment, to examine the particular features. Hence all was approbation and applause; and hence even the better judges were sometimes momentarily deceived by the commanding impressions of such rich humour and buffoonery.

As an Author,

The first effort of Foote's pen seemed to mark the future eccentricities of his character. This was a Narrative of the murder of his uncle, Sir John Dineley Goodere, (as related in the beginning of these memoirs;) in which he undertook the defence of his other uncle, Captain Samuel Goodere, who was executed for this crime on the fullest and clearest evidence. Why he should have

singled out this subject, so disgraceful to himself and family, for his maiden effort, may at first view appear so profligate and absurd, as to be a subject of perpetual charge against him: but though I by no means intend to defend the decency or morality of this action, some extenuations may be made for so whimsical a genius.

When he was induced to write this pamphlet, he was a very young man, immersed in all the expensive follies of the times, and had just outrun his first fortune. In these distressed circumstances, without trade or profession, and when perhaps borrowing could go no further, he was solicited by a bookseller in the Old Bailey, with the powerful inducement of ten pounds in hand, and ten more on the sale reaching a stipulated extent, to write upon this subject, which was the popular story of the day, and of which he was supposed to be more intimately informed than any other person, from his near connection with the parties. The event was likewise no secret to the world; it was already in every body's *mouth:* and the pamphlet was published

without his name, which saved him the open disgrace which would attach to him from the circumstance of his being known as author.

It may be supposed too, that in attempting to defend the character of his uncle Samuel from the charge of his brother's murder, he might imagine himself employed in wiping away a stain from his family: for though the evidence against this unhappy man was strong, and at the time incontrovertible, there might be a *possibility* of his innocence; which whether the writer believed or not, he might hope that his ingenuity could so manage it, as partly to withdraw the public odium from his memory.

All these circumstances, together with the imperious necessity of *eating*, were strong temptations to a mind not overcharged with the impressions of religious, or moral duties; and which, at that time, could probably see no other possible means of procuring a subsistence.

But it may be said, that he should have endured the severest strokes of fortune, rather than submit to such a case; while

others may carry their rigour still further, and exclaim, "that he should have died rather than eat the bread of such dishonour!" The first may readily be granted: but the second is so much a question of *nerve*, that few men perhaps could answer for themselves till the moment of trial; and Foote, in his firmest and most philosophic hour, was no *Roman*.

The following little anecdote seems so naturally to belong to the character of the man who could write the Narrative just alluded to, that it would be injuring the portrait to omit the recital of it.

On the morning of his carrying home the copy of this pamphlet to his bookseller, he was in such necessitous circumstances, that he was actually obliged to wear his boots without stockings; and on his receiving his ten pounds, he stopped at a hosier's in Fleet-street to repair this defect. He had scarcely issued from the shop, when he was met by two or three of his old college chums; who had just arrived in London on a frolic, and now challenged him to make one of *their* party to dinner at the Bedford. He

at once lost all reflection, and accepted the proposal: he used indeed at all times to say, "that a careful rigid economy was the most mortifying thing, next to absolute want;" and perhaps on this occasion he had no other thought than that of losing the remembrance of his late sad hours of meditation in the convivialities of early friendship.

While the glass and good humour circulated round the table after dinner, one of his companions, *smoking* his boots, cried out, "Why, hey, Foote, how is all this? you seem to have no stockings on?"—"No," said the other, instantly recollecting himself; "I never wear any at this time of the year, till I am going to dress for the evening; and you see I am always provided with a pair for the occasion." On his here pulling a pair of white silk stockings out of his pocket, it silenced the laugh and suspicion of his friends; and it passed off as the singular frolic of a very singular character.

The next literary work which he produced (independent of his dramatic pieces), was *A Treatise on the* Passions, written

about the year 1747 : in which he brings to the bar of the public, the several merits and defects of Garrick, Quin, Barry, and other principal actors ; and though he pays some compliment to Garrick's *Lear*, yet at the same time indulges himself in noticing what he calls " the blemishes of that character."

This pamphlet evidently bears the impression of talent, and shows the graver powers of Foote as a critic and a man of reading in a very forcible point of view ; but from his very outset in life, every thing which sounded the praise of Garrick was wormwood to his soul. He always spoke contemptuously of him as a writer, and in many particulars strove to depreciate his merits as an actor ; but in vain ! Garrick's theatrical abilities were of that splendid and genuine stamp, which could not only stand the test of ridicule, but attach ignorance or malice to all who could not admire them.

Beside these, he wrote two other pamphlets ; the one upon comedy, the other on tragedy : which were reckoned very elegant and judicious performances. But the degree of literary merit by which he will be

long remembered, is that of being a *dramatic* writer of a new cast, who drew the *veluti in speculum* closer to the eyes of an audience than any author before his time, by bringing forward particular and recent characters to elucidate the views of general nature.

When Foote produced his first piece at the Haymarket Theatre, he may be said to have exhibited a species of dramatic writing (if we except the single instance of the Duke of Buckingham's *Rehearsal*) unknown since the *middle comedy* of the Grecian stage. *This* was so called, as being an improvement on the *old* comedy; which, succeeding to the *cart* of Thespis, partook in a great degree of the loose jokes, personal abuse, and irregularities, of that wild and infant state of the drama. No rank or condition was spared in the old comedy; not even the chief magistrates, nor the very judges by whose voice they were permitted to perform: their insolence at last reached to open impiety, and their ridicule was levelled equally at gods and men.

This licentiousness was at length restrain-

ed, by a law which gave birth to what is called the *middle* comedy, and which provided that no man's name should be mentioned on the stage, under severe penalties; and public censors were appointed to make reports of all who should offend in this particular.

But it unfortunately happens, that when abuses are found profitable, or gratifying to human malignity, art and chicanery are exerted to cover them, notwithstanding any law which can be made to the contrary. Thus the poets of those times were not long in finding out the secret of defeating this regulation, by attaching fictitious names to well-known and real characters: so that now they had the superior advantage of giving a more exquisite gratification to their own vanity, and the malice of the spectators; by affording to the former the pleasure of imposing upon the latter the task of discovering the real individuals pourtrayed by the different personages which passed in review before them.

When pictures so much resemble their originals that the names are unnecessary,

nobody inscribes them. The consequence of this law, therefore, was merely to cause that to be done with some delicacy, which before was done more grossly; and the art which it was intended to confine within the limits of propriety, was still transgressed, but with more ingenuity.

Before our entering into the merits of Foote as a dramatic writer, it will be necessary to discuss how far he was justifiable in adopting this particular species of the drama, and whether the practice is reconcilable to the rules of justice and the genuine laws of comedy.

The advocates for this personal satire (and in this number must be included almost all those who have touched upon the life and character of Foote) urge, "that when hypocrisy and dissimulation would insidiously contaminate the principles of mankind, it is but doing justice to the world to withdraw the mask, and expose to public view the natural features in all their distortions and deformities: or when affectation and singularity overcloud the more valuable parts of characters, which, divested of these foi-

bles, might claim additional value and respect in society, it is themselves alone who act the ridiculous part; and it should be deemed rather an act of kindness both to them and their friends, to set up such a mirror before them, as would give them the hint and opportunity of correction. In a word," say they, "if a *Sir Penurious Trifle*, a *Peter Paragraph*, and a *Cadwallader*, have ever had their prototypes in real life, let them keep their own secret, and reform their respective follies: nor can we help being of opinion, that an author of this kind is, in some respects, more useful to the age in which he lives, than he who only ranges abroad in the various scenes of life for general character."

On the other hand, and with much more reason, many who readily agree as to the necessity and uses of reforming the vices and follies of mankind, yet totally differ about the means. In every well regulated government men give up a certain part of their rights in order to form that subordination and discipline by which the society is held together, and without which all

would be lawless confusion. Now if every man who thinks he has abilities and candour for the office of a reformer, undertakes to correct his neighbour's vices and follies, he assumes an actual part in the government of the country with which he is not entrusted; and being in this under the sanction or direction of no specific law as to the execution of such an office, he finds himself at liberty to act according to the arbitrary dictates of his own malice, his interest, or his mistaken good intentions.

To this it is no answer to say, that "as the law takes no particular cognizance of these subjects, individuals *may*, in so doing, produce benefit to society:" most certainly they *may not:* for though the law, for wise and salutary purposes, is silent in attaching punishments to some things not strictly moral, or suppressing others that may be merely ridiculous, yet it will punish men who merely by their own authority usurp this office; whenever the parties attacked can prove their injuries in point of fortune, character, peace of mind, or any other respect.

But to come more immediately to the case in point before us,—how, in reality, did our author, with all his wit, judgment, and knowledge of the world, either benefit the age he lived in, or reform the individual, by the few instances which he has left us of his strong personal satire? Why, in one example, by ridiculing a very virtuous man, because he had the misfortune of losing a leg? in another, by trampling on the laws of friendship and hospitality, in order to expose a respectable individual, merely because he laboured under some personal defects, or might have a little too much family pride? and in a third, by attacking a woman already under a criminal prosecution, and opening a side-battery of ridicule upon her private follies and vices?

If the advocates for this kind of satire are not satisfied with modern instances, let us trace it back to its fountain-head, and there we shall see it in its very source as foul as its remotest currents. History informs us, that its original introduction, far from mending the morals of the Athenians, operated quite the reverse; for the poets, finding

themselves sheltered under the perversions of the law, broke out into a wide and ungovernable range of personality and partial invective, which soon rendered Comedy, as it has been forcibly remarked, "rather a Fury armed with torches and firebrands, than a pleasing and instructive preceptor of human life."

Who, that reflects but for a moment on such a man as Socrates falling a victim to this kind of buffoonery, will not revolt from it with horror and detestation? Contemplate this man, who is truly recorded as "the divine philosopher," dragged forth every night on a public stage, to make sport for unfeeling folly and vulgar malice: and, what must still heighten the profligacy of the spectacle, himself sitting among the audience, with the greatest philosophical forbearance; thus affording to licentiousness its widest latitude, by setting in comparison the great original with the baseness and besotted ingratitude of his fellow-citizens.

The lessons of *such* a school of morality quickly produced suitable results. The public exposure of this exalted man, prepared

the way for the designs of more serious enemies; who, availing themselves of the already corrupted state of the public mind, brought charges against him which ultimately and successfully affected his invaluable life; casting a scandal on the city of Athens, which neither its subsequent repentance and tears, nor the lapse of successive ages, have ever been able to eradicate.

It now only remains to apply to the advocates for personal satire the *argumentum ad hominem*, by asking them the simple question, How would they like to be thus exposed themselves? and with what degree of philosophic temper could they sit in a crowded theatre, surrounded by the winkers, laughers, and sneerers,

> A fixed figure for the hand of Scorn
> To point his slow unmoving finger at?

The patient endurance of such a scene, is almost above the feeling of humanity: as has been already proved in a variety of instances; particularly Dryden, Sir Godfrey Kneller, Garrick, the elder Sheridan, and even Foote himself; who, though all

hearty laughers at the foibles of others, felt with various degrees of resentment the reprehension of their own. In short, the liberty of the stage is like the liberty of the press; we call it a blessing when we are inclined to write against others, but a grievous calamity when we find it turned in a similar manner against ourselves.

Away then with this species of stage reformation! equally derogatory to morality and to genuine comedy: which latter does not seek to make its satire personal, but to correct the manners by the representation of public vices and public follies; which gives the individual the lesson of advice, without exposing his want of it; which does not keep a show glass to exhibit private scandal and defamation, but

> "Holds the mirror up to nature:
> To show Virtue her own feature, Scorn her own image;
> And the very age and body of the time
> Its form and pressure."

In reprehending this dramatic vice (which has been done with some detail, in the hope of setting the question at rest), it must now-

ever be observed, that the writings of Foote cannot be charged universally with it; for except in three or four instances (in which the persons are almost described by name), he has perhaps not much departed from the line of general satire. It is true, as he was an author that hunted the fleeting follies of the day more than any of his cotemporaries, every thing that was most conspicuous fell under his observation, and of course was subjected by him to particular applications. But this does not attach to him in the way of censure; since he does not personify the parties, or dramatize the incidents precisely as they happened. He only acts the part of a skilful physician; who investigates the *endemial* complaint, and applies that remedy which he thinks most likely to cure it.

Leaving him therefore to his fate when he is guilty, he is entitled to our justice equally in those pieces which are independent of personal satire: these form the far greater part of his works, and may be ranked among the favourite *petites pièces* of the drama.

That he never attempted the more enlarged and perfect species of comedy, was

probably by no means owing to a deficiency of abilities, but to the nature of the original plan which he prescribed to himself; being principally that of exhibiting *one* strong portrait, with all the other characters subordinate to it, without the assistance of much intricacy of plot, or episode: and in considering the happy selection which he has made from the great mass of temporary vices and follies, and the manner in which he has arranged that selection, who can deny him the praise of judgment and exuberant fancy?

His comedies, therefore, may be considered as *sketches*, rather than as finished pieces; where we are to look for the *genius* and *taste* of the artist, without the laboured *detail* of his pencil. From the effect of what we see, we are at once satisfied; and do not wish to have our curiosity obstructed, or the broad laugh suspended, by the interference of inferior personages, who often seem to be retained in the service of the Muses for no other purpose than to assist in the *denouement* of the piece.

Besides the strength of his characters, his

dialogue shows a solid and extensive *knowledge of mankind* in their various customs and manners; now exhibiting the keenest strokes of temporary satire, and now a flow of humour which nothing but the closest judgment, and the most penetrating discernment of human nature, could suggest.

In the quality of WIT he is equally exuberant: with a store equal to that of Congreve in his proudest day of dramatic reputation, he never scatters it indifferently. Foote's *wits* are real wits; "his *fools* are fools indeed."—His HUMOUR is in the same degree of *keeping:* all are distributed with great dramatic justice; and form the natural *minutiæ* of expression on which the basis of character is founded, and which render it the truest *conversation copy* of the times in which he wrote.

On the whole, Foote must be considered as a great and fertile genius, possessed of a comic vein, superior in many respects to that of any writer of the age he lived in. Happy for the range of his talent, that it was totally

unfettered by the cares of life! Fortune, under her lowest declensions, could not control his spirits; he saw the follies and vices of mankind with a quick, discerning, yet *undisturbed* eye. Hence his constant accuracy of discrimination of character; and hence his humour, ridicule, satire, and wit, all ranged at will, free and unchecked in the course of their respective excursions.

It has been often asked, rich and humorous as his dramatic writings are admitted to be, will they outlive the present age? Some, no doubt, from the individuality of their character, and the raciness of the incidents, will lose much of the charms which they originally afforded: but posterity will discover that these were once the reigning vices and follies, and will perceive that they have been exposed by a writer fully competent to the subject; while many of his pieces, which carry a broader mark of satire, (such as *The Minor, The Devil upon Two Sticks, The Liar, The Patron, The Mayor of Garrat, Taste, The Commissary,* and others,) will always more or less apply to existing characters.

In delivering this opinion, however, let it be remembered, that as Foote himself and Weston filled most of the principal characters, great care must be taken to provide for them as able substitutes as possible. Without such workmen, therefore, the dramatic materials of Foote must lie on the shelf, till others may be found who can exhibit them to equal advantage. The *mere walking gentlemen* of the present stage will not do: they have been unhappily trained in a kind of dialogue so very different from his, that it scarcely partakes of the same idiom; and if suddenly thrust into characters speaking a *new language*, they must appear as awkward as *Tom Errand* in *Beau Clincher's* clothes.

I have now closed the account of the life of a man who, in many instances, may be considered as a very rare original, which Nature, in her gayest moments, seems to have cast in a mould expressly made for the purpose. Such a character deserves a conspicuous niche in the temple of private history. In his talents let us admire the singularity of his genius, the sprightliness of

his wit, the exuberance of his fancy, and the frequent utility of his satire. Even from his follies let us be warned of similar errors, when we find that neither the most brilliant natural qualities, nor the favours of fortune, can secure happiness and respect, unless founded on the basis of virtue and prudence.

The following is a correct list of our Author's dramatic works, with the several dates of their performance and publication :—

		Performed.	*Printed.*
1	Diversions of the Morning *(not printed)*	1747	
2	Auction of Pictures *(not printed)*	1748	
3	The Knights, a Comedy	1748	1754
4	Taste, a Comedy	1752	
5	The Englishman in Paris, a Comedy	1753	
6	The Englishman returned from Paris, a Farce	1756	
7	The Author, a Comedy	1757	

		Performed.	Printed.
8	The Diversions of the Morning, altered, a Farce *(not printed)*	1758	
9	The Minor, a Comedy	1760	
10	The Liar, a Comedy	1761	1764
11	The Orators, a Comedy	1762	
12	The Mayor of Garrat, a Comedy	1763	
13	The Patron, a Comedy	1764	
14	The Commissary, Com.	1765	
15	Prelude on opening the Haymarket Theatre	1767	
16	The Devil upon Two Sticks, a Comedy	1768	1778
17	The Lame Lover, Com.	1770	
18	The Maid of Bath, Com.	1771	1778
19	The Nabob, a Comedy	1772	1778
20	Piety in Pattens, a Farce *(not printed)*	1773	
21	The Bankrupt, a Comedy	1773	
22	The Cozeners, a Comedy	1774	1778
23	The Capuchin, a Comedy	1776	1778
24	A Trip to Calais, Com. *(never performed)*	1778	

Besides these pieces, he suffered his name to be put to a work entitled, *The Comic Theatre,* in 5 volumes 12mo; being a

translation of a number of French comedies, of which the following is a correct list. I am informed, however, on good authority, that *only the first* of these (named the Young Hypocrite) can, with any certainty, be ascribed to him.

BON-MOTS,

CHARACTERS, OPINIONS, &c. &c.

OF

FOOTE.

I. *The Discovery.*

A GENTLEMAN praising the personal charms of a very plain woman before Foote, the latter whispered him, "And why don't you lay claim to such an accomplished beauty?"—"What right have I to her?" said the other.—"Every right, by the law of all nations; as *the first discoverer.*"

II. *The Retort Courteous.*

Following a man in the street who did not bear the best of characters, he slapped him familiarly on the shoulder, thinking he was an intimate friend. On discovering his mistake, he cried out, "Oh! Sir, I beg your pardon, I really took you for a

gentleman who——."—"Well, Sir," said the other, not suffering him to finish his sentence, "and am I not a *gentleman?*" "Nay, Sir," said Foote, "if you take it up in that way, I must only beg your pardon a *second time.*"

III. *Garrick.*

Previously to Foote's bringing out his *Primitive Puppet-Show* at the Haymarket Theatre, a lady of fashion asked him, "Pray, Sir, are your puppets to be as large as life?"—"Oh dear, Madam, no: not much above the size of Garrick!"

IV. *Port Wine.*

Dining at the table of a nobleman who generally gave nothing but port wine, Foote met his wine merchant there, who asked him, in the course of conversation, how the last pipe of port turned out? "Why, I should suppose pretty well," said he, "as I *have had no complaints from the kitchen.*"—There was as much truth as jest in this reply; as Foote, when he was in *cash,* indulged his servants in all kinds of *luxuries.*

v. *Cape Wine.*

Being at the same table another day, when the Cape was going round in remarkable small glasses, his Lordship was very profuse on the excellence of the wine, its age, &c. "But you don't seem to relish it, Foote, by keeping your glass so long before you?"—"Oh, yes, my Lord; perfectly well: I am only admiring how *little* it is considering *its great age.*"

vi. *Modish Civility.*

Walking on the north parade at Bath in company with a friend, he returned the salute of a man of fashion who bore rather a suspicious character. "Do you know whom you saluted?" said his friend. "Oh, yes, perfectly well, but what can a man do? You know there's no *turning one's back* upon such fellows."

vii. *Mrs. Macauley.*

When Mrs. Macauley published a pamphlet called "*Loose Thoughts,*" several ladies, who happened to be in company

with Foote, reprobated the title as very improper for a woman.—"Not at all, ladies; the sooner a woman *gets rid of such thoughts, the better.*"

VIII. *Matrimony the best Doctor.*

An artist belonging to the Royal Academy being much hypped, was eternally complaining of illness, but could never tell what was the matter with him. At last he married; which being told to Foote, he exclaimed, "I heartily wish him joy; for now he'll readily find out what's the matter with him."

IX. *An old Proverb.*

The same artist meeting him some time afterwards, exclaimed, "Well, Foote, you have been premature about my finding out my disorder, as I have got the *best* wife in the world."—"I am sorry for that, my dear friend; for you know the old proverb, *bad is the best.*"

X. *A Cure for bad Poetry.*

A physician at Bath told him that he had

a mind to publish his own poems; but he had *so many irons in the fire,* he did not well know what to do. "Then take my advice, Doctor," said Foote, "and *put your poems where your irons are.*"

XI. *Arithmetical Criticism.*

A mercantile man of his acquaintance who would read a poem of his to him one day after dinner, he pompously began:

"Hear me, O Phœbus! and ye Muses nine!

Pray be atttentive."—"I am," said Foote, "*nine* and *one* are *ten;* go on."

XII. *The Parson his own Glebeholder.*

A well-beneficed old parson being in a large company at a public dinner, he entertained them with nothing but the situation and profits of his parochial livings, the *glebe* of which he said he kept *entirely to himself.* The company were much teased with this for some time; when Foote, observing the parson stretch across the table a pair of dirty brown hands, instantly exclaimed, "Well, Doctor; I don't know

what the rest of the company may think of you, but for my part, I now see you do keep *your glebe in your own hands.*"

XIII. *The Dear Wife.*

A gentleman just married, telling Foote that he had that morning laid out three thousand pounds in jewels for *his dear wife;* "Well," said the other, "you have but done her justice; as, by your own *reckoning,* she must be a very *valuable woman.*"

XIV. *The Retort piquant.*

A lady of suspected virtue being one night at Vauxhall gardens when the company of *impures* were rather numerous, observed to Foote, who was walking with her, "How *beastly full* the place was!"—"Why, no, Madam," said he, looking her full in the face; "I think 'tis rather *brim-full.*"

XV. *Baron Newman.*

This celebrated gambler (well known about town thirty years ago by the title of

the *left-handed Baron* *) being detected, in the rooms at Bath, in the act of secreting a card, the company, in the warmth of their resentment, threw him out of the window of a one pair of stairs room where they were playing. The Baron meeting Foote some time afterwards, loudly complained of this usage, and asked him what he should do to repair his injured honour. "Do!" said the wit, "why, 'tis a plain case; never play *so high* again as long as you live."

XVI. *Major B——ton.*

Meeting the Major at Bath (a character then well known in the annals of play), he asked him, with all the cordiality occasioned by a long absence, how he was? "Ah, Foote!" said the other, "I have had a terrible accident since I saw you last; no less than the *loss* of my eye."—"An eye,

* The occasion of this appellation was, his concealing a card at piquet under his left hand, which his antagonist perceiving, thrust a fork through his hand, and nailed him to the table, which gave him a partial lameness in that hand ever after. This unhappy man shot himself about the year 1786, after an unsuccessful season at Brighton.

my dear fellow!" cried the other with the greatest seeming anxiety; "pray, *at what game?*"

XVII. *The Lame Lover.*

When Foote parted with his Theatre to Colman, he got himself engaged at the same time as a principal performer; but some difference arising about settling the value of the comedy of *The Lame Lover*, Colman observed, that it would not bring so much as the other pieces, and therefore he should have an abatement. "Yes, yes," said the other, "it will; for though he is *nominally lame*, I shall always lend him a *foot* for his support."

XVIII. *The Newspaper.*

A proprietor of a declining newspaper being asked in company how much he *divided* yearly, and demurring to the question, Foote answered quickly, "Oh, Sir, this is an *amicable* society; *they never divide upon any account.*"

XIX. *Sir Francis Blake Delaval.*

Foote at a very early period of his life formed an acquaintance with this gentleman, which continued with uninterrupted good humour and friendship to the death of the latter. They seemed to have possessed from nature what are perhaps the best requisites for so intimate an union;—a similarity of taste and studies; with a superiority in the one not to dread a rivalship of the other, and a disposition in the other to acquiesce in that superiority. Pleasure, through its infinite ramifications, was the great object of their lives; and both having fortunes (the one, patrimonial; the other, acquired) to support this object, they pursued it in all its sources; from books and the most brilliant conversation, sometimes to the lowest species of buffoonery.

In this partnership of wit and humour, Foote stood first in the *firm:* which the other submitted to with the most perfect accord; playing his part, where he could, by either rebutting the jests of his col-

league, or himself commencing the first attack.

XX. *The same.*

Sir Francis, having *dipped* his estates considerably, turned his thoughts towards matrimony; and as he was a remarkably handsome man, with a fine address and polished manners, he stood fair to establish himself to advantage in this line. Foote happened to be acquainted with Lady Harriet Paulet: a lady with ninety thousand pounds at her own disposal, but very plain in her person; and, it is said, equally so in her understanding. He introduced his friend, who soon gained upon her affections, and a day was appointed for the marriage: but a doubt striking Sir Francis, why Foote, whom he knew to be as much in want of money as himself, did not marry her, he put the question to him. "And so I would," said Foote, "but"—"But what, Sir?" said the other, impatiently.—"But that I happened to be already married to my washer-woman *."

* A familiar name which he always applied to his wife.

XXI. *The same.*

When Sir Francis introduced his lady into the gay world, he was much rallied by his acquaintance on the homeliness of her person; upon which Foote said, "that as *he* made the match, he must likewise make his friend's apology; which was, that he bought her by *weight*, and *paid nothing for the fashion.*"

XXII. *The same.*

Soon after the death of the above-mentioned lady (who did not long survive her marriage), a mutual acquaintance of the parties meeting Foote, said "he had just seen Sir Francis dressed in deep mourning, by which he supposed he must have lost some valuable friend."—"Oh! no," said the other; "Frank's *only a widower.*"

XXIII. *The same.*

Sir Francis sitting one night in the front boxes of Drury-lane with a lady of fashion, whilst Sevigney (who had been bred a cutler) was playing *Selim* in *Barbarossa*, the

lady felt herself much affected with a particular passage, and exclaimed, "I am almost ashamed of my weakness, but that man *cuts me* to the very heart!"—"Oh! dear Madam," said the other, "how can it be otherwise? consider, he's *a razor-grinder.*"

XXIV. *The same.*

Whenever these two wits were in town at the same time, they generally dined together, either at their own or some of their friends' houses, the tavern, &c. Foote, just after returning from Ireland, lived mostly with Sir Francis; who, though he kept a good table, did not always spread it with much taste. The conversation turning one day on the hospitalities of the Irish, Foote praised them much; and said, "they had the superiority in living, in some respects, above us." This Sir Francis denied, by saying, that "though they gave good things, they did not generally introduce them to the best advantage."

Soon after this, Sir Francis having occasion to step into an adjoining room,

Foote turned round to one of the company, and cried out, "Did you ever hear such a hound as this? talking of the elegancies of a table; and here I have been seven days together dining with him on a greasy loin of pork. What he can mean by it, I don't know; except he means to run his pork against *The Beggar's Opera* *."

Sir Francis by this time returned; and overhearing the last sentence, good-humouredly exclaimed, "What, Foote! at my loin of pork still?"—"No," said the other, perfectly unabashed, "your loins of pork have been *at me;* and if you don't *take them off,* in another week I suppose I shall be as full of bristles as Peter the wild man."

XXV. *The same.*

These little sallies of humour, however, did not interrupt the harmony of the two friends. They played, as it were, the first and second fiddle occasionally; and pro-

* About this time Beard and Miss Brent were performing in *The Beggar's Opera,* night after night, at Covent-garden Theatre with great success.

vided the concert contributed to their own or the company's amusement, all was well. Sometimes they regaled themselves over a bottle; sometimes amused themselves in the green-room, sporting with the performers; sometimes at ridottos, masquerades, &c.; and occasionally making the *virtuoso* round, as they called it,—which consisted in visiting all the curious exhibitions from the Tower to Hyde-park-corner.

Sir Francis carried this whimsical humour into the country; where, whether at his own house, or at his brother's (Lord Delaval), Foote, as his *arbiter deliciarum*, arranged all the festivities. These were composed, by turns, of an ass-race, a puppet-show, a grinning-match, a shift-race by women; and lastly (though not least frequently) a sack-race, in which all the runners were close buttoned up to the chin in sacks, and in this condition the first who *jumped* to a certain distance was the winner.

These amusements drew a great deal of the company of the neighbourhood to Seaton Delaval; where they all partook of

the convivialities of the table, as well as the sports on the lawn.

In the midst of this gay, frolicsome life, Foote suggested to Sir Francis, "that as he (Sir Francis) was fond of the stage, and a good performer himself, it would be turning his talents to some account, to get up some creditable play, in which himself and friends might fill up the characters." The hint was immediately taken; and Garrick was applied to for the use of his Theatre, who readily granted it at the request of so many noble and honourable suitors.

Private theatricals were at this period very rare; they had been almost laid aside from the time when Frederick Prince of Wales had honoured them by his encouragement at Cliefden and Leicester houses: so that the report of this intended *fête*, as a novelty, drew much of the attention of the town. The scenery was for some months in preparation, the dresses were magnificent, and tickets of admission were distributed to only the first people of condition. The play fixed upon was *Othello:* the part of *Othello*, by Sir Francis; *Iago*,

by his brother (the present **Lord Delaval**); *Desdemona*, by Lady **Mexborough**: **and** after the play, there were to be **a ball, supper**, &c. in a grand style.

Foote was intended for **one of this party**; but, either from accident or **design, did not** attend till the play was finished, **and then** entered the great green-room as the company were all taking refreshments. **"Oh,** Foote! where have you been? **what have** you lost! such a play you'll **never have** another opportunity of seeing!" **was the** general buz from one end of the **room to** the other. To all this the wit bowed contrition, disappointment, and so forth; **when** slily approaching the place where **Garrick** sat, he asked him, in a whisper loud **enough** to be heard by the whole company, "what he *seriously* thought of it?"—"Think of it!" says Garrick, equally wishing to be heard, "why, that I never *suffered* so much in my whole life!"—"What! *for the author?* I thought so. Alas! poor Shakspeare!"

The company not being prepared for **this** stroke, the laugh was unanimous **against**

Garrick; which Sir Francis joined in with as much good humour as if he was not at all affected by the sarcasm.

XXVI. *The same.*

Sir Francis and Foote, strolling from the Turk's-head tavern in Gerard-street, not a little inebriated, espied a *bona roba* most tawdrily dressed out, ogling them from her drawing-room window. This was enough to excite the gallantry of Sir Francis; who, instantly dropping upon one knee, theatrically exclaimed, "*Ah, ma chere belle!*" Foote, seeing this, was determined not to be outdone in gallantry; and accordingly, placing himself by the side of Sir Francis, exclaimed in the same impassioned tone of voice and manner, "*Ah, ma Jeze-bel!*"

XXVII. *Lord Delaval.*

This nobleman having presented one of his chaplains to a good living, a person in company said, "Well, let the Delavals alone for doing things in a *good style*"

(stile).—"It may be so," said Foote, "but it is not, however, *their usual gait*" (gate).

XXVIII. *Death of Sir Francis.*

But the moment at last arrived which was to break this bond of fun, wit, and humour, for ever. Sir Francis depended too much on the strength of a good constitution, to balance his successive dissipations; hence he grew corpulent, acquired gross humours, and (what was still worse) was subject to spasms in his stomach, which, though often alarming, gave no check to his irregularities.

During the summer of 1772, dining at the house of his brother-in-law (Lord Mexborough), and taking a good deal of ice after a hearty dinner, he felt himself so suddenly and violently chilled, that he called for a rummer of brandy, which he drank off at once. At that moment a convulsive spasm seized him, and he fell from his chair senseless. He was carried home in this state, and had every proper assistance

administered to him, but in vain. He died, without ever recovering from his fit, on the following morning.

Foote heard of this melancholy event with a sincere sorrow. He loved him with as much constancy of friendship as he could feel towards any man; and to be deprived of him in the meridian of life, when they thought they had many more follies to commit, and many more pleasures to hunt down, was a disappointment of a distressing nature to a *brother wit:* besides, Sir Francis was at times his *flatterer,* and occasionally his *dupe;* and Foote might, in this respect, have felt a loss similar to that ascribed to the Duke of Buckingham:

"No *wit* to flatter left, of all his store;
No *fool* to laugh at, which he valued more."

But whatever motives might have formed the basis of his grief, his immediate sorrow on hearing of the event was pungent and sincere. He burst into a flood of tears, retired to his room, and saw no company for three days.

On [illegible] his treasurer, calling [illegible] of some

urgent business, he, with swelled eyes and in faultering words, inquired when Sir Francis was to be buried. "Not till the latter end of next week, Sir," replied the other; "as I hear the surgeons intend first to *dissect his head.*" This last expression (as in instances of madness) striking the chord of his ruling passion, he suddenly exclaimed, "And what will they get *there?* I'm sure I have known poor Frank these five-and-twenty years, and I never could find any thing *in it.*"

XXIX. *Holland, the Actor.*

A similar instance of the predominance of his favourite passion was afforded by the death of Holland, of Drury-lane Theatre. This performer was the son of a *baker* who lived at Chiswick: and having an early inclination, as well as certain abilities, for the stage, young Holland was brought out under the immediate patronage and tuition of Garrick; from whom if he did not catch his divine *fire,* he imitated his *art* so well in many instances, as to render himself very respectable in the line of his profession.

Foote had a long intimacy and regard for him: and when Holland died of the small-pox, about the year 1768, he left our hero a legacy, and appointed him one of the bearers to his funeral; which last office he performed with a sincere sorrow. Looking in at the Bedford Coffee-house the same evening, he was asked whether he had attended the remains of his old friend to Chiswick? "Oh! yes, poor fellow," said he (the tears scarce dry upon his cheeks); "I have just seen him *shoved into the family oven.*"

XXX. *The Character of Sir Francis Blake Delaval. By a Friend.*

This gentleman was born with very superior advantages of person and of fortune. The former he availed himself of in the prosecution of his pleasures; the latter he employed alternately as a means of dissipation and of generosity. In modern honour and modern gallantry he vied with the first fashionables in Europe; and if blending foreign pleasures with English eccentricities

constituted a *real patriot*, he even surpassed the most sanguine of the Bill of Rights*.

Had he been born in the court of Nero, he, in all probability, would have attained the highest honours. Not that he possessed a grain of that monster's cruelty; but, from being inspired with an ambition for the same amusements, he would have rode with him as a charioteer, fiddled with him as a musician, fenced with him as a gladiator, and strutted with him as a player.

Though indolent in business, he was active in his pleasures; and so strongly did he possess the spirit of emulation, that he would be the leading *showman* of his day, whatever species of frivolity was the fashion. Yet, with all these drawbacks upon his character, he was not deficient in either wit, or learning, or in the ready application of both. He excelled sometimes in repartee; and once replied to the late Lord Chatham in the

* Sir Francis was a strenuous supporter of a club at that time which adopted the name of "The Bill of Rights." It had a degree of *popularity*; and that, probably, was his principal inducement.

House of Commons, with a point and promptitude, which for a time abashed even that celebrated statesman*.

His early and long acquaintance with Foote cultivated his talents for *pun* and *bon-mot;* in the former of which points he was a proficient, but in the latter attempted too frequently to be always successful. He was, notwithstanding, what may be well called an agreeable gay companion: and to this character he united generosity, affability, politeness, and good nature; nor was he, perhaps, ever intentionally any man's enemy.

Let those who dislike this character on the whole, first ask themselves whether, under the temptation of such a figure, such a fortune, and such vivacity of constitution, they would not have some difficulty in leaving, themselves, one more perfect?

* Mr. Pitt having attacked some opinions of Sir Francis in the House of Commons (soon after he had himself abandoned his former ideas of a German war) as savouring too much of the *buffoonery of the stage;* Sir Francis, in reply, said, "that if *once* performing a character on the stage could be imputed to him as an act of buffoonery, he must plead guilty to that charge: but this he could say in his own justification, and he could wish it would equally apply to the Right Hon. Gentleman who spoke last; that it was the *only* part he ever played in his life."

XXXI. *Irish Hospitality.*

Foote praising the hospitalities of the Irish, after one of his trips from the sister kingdom, a gentleman present asked him whether he had ever been in *Cork*. "No, Sir," said he, quickly; "but I have seen a great many *drawings* of it."

XXXII. *Miss Brent.*

Before the present alterations were made in Vauxhall-gardens, it was common, on a rainy night, for the company and singers to retire to the rotunda, where the amusements of the evening were carried on. Foote, on one of these occasions, happened to be sitting just under the celebrated Miss Brent (who was remarkable for a *strong breath*), while she sung one of her favourite songs, which was loudly applauded and *encored*. "Well, Foote," said a lady, seeing him rather silent in his applause; "what think you of this song? You don't seem to like it much."—"Why, as to the words, my lady, I think them very pretty; but, to tell you the truth, I don't much relish *the air*."

XXXIII. *Fordyce the Banker.*

At Fordyce's sale at Roehampton (in 1772), Foote, who attended almost every day, bought nothing but a pillow; on which he was asked what particular use he could have for a single pillow? "As a *narcotic*," said he; "for if the original proprietor could sleep so soundly on it, at the time of owing so much as he did, it may be of singular service to me on many occasions."*

XXXIV. *Dr. Kenrick.*

One of the performers coming up to Foote in the Green-room with a long face, said, he had just heard that Dr. Kenrick was going to give a public critique on his last new comedy of *The Cozeners* at *Marybone-gardens*. "Is he so?" said Foote: "well, let the Doctor take care of the fate of our first parents, a *fall in the garden*."

XXXV. *Neutrality in Polemical Divinity.*

Happening to spend an evening with two dignitaries of the church, the subject insen-

* The original of this is a *bon-mot* of the emperor Augustus.

sibly turned on polemical divinity; which causing a difference of opinion between them, they appealed to Foote. "I thank you, gentlemen," said he; "but I always make it a rule never to meddle *in family affairs*."

XXXVI. *Woodward.*

Woodward having some difference with Garrick about increase of salary, consulted Foote on the subject, and urged the reasonableness of his demand from the great variety of characters in which he was engaged. "Why, indeed Harry," said Foote, "considering you play in *pantomimes* as well as *comedies*, I think you are fully entitled to the money, whether you are paid by the *hour* or the *ground*."

XXXVII. *Mrs. Abington.*

When Mrs. Abington returned from her first very successful trip to Ireland, Foote wished to engage her for his summer theatre, but in the mean time Garrick secured her for Drury-lane. Foote, on hearing this, asked her why she gave Garrick the preference? "I don't know how it was," said

she, "he talked me over so by telling me he would make me *immortal*, that I did not know how to refuse him."—"Oh! did he so? then I'll soon outbid him that way; for, come to me, and I will give you two pounds a week more, and *charge you nothing for immortality*."

XXXVIII. *Dining badly.*

Foote returning from dining with a *lord of the admiralty*, was met by a friend, who asked him what sort of a day he had had. "Very indifferent indeed: bad company, and a worse dinner."—"I wonder at that," said the other, "as I thought the admiral a good jolly fellow."—"Why, as to that, he may be a good *sea-lord*, but take it from me, he is a very bad *land-lord*."

XXXIX. *Dining worse.*

On another day, coming from the same nobleman's table, he exclaimed, "Worse and worse! every thing about the table *stunk* but the vinegar, and that was *sweet*."

XL. *Dibble Davis.*

Dibble Davis, one of Foote's *butts in ordinary*, dining with him one day at North-end, observed, that "well as he loved porter, he could never drink it *without a head.*" "That must be a mistake, Dibble," returned his host; "as you have done so to my knowledge above these twenty years."

XLI. *The Point of Female Beauty.*

Being asked at what time of life he thought female beauty began to decline, he replied: "Woman is to be counted like a game of piquet: twenty-five, twenty-six, twenty-seven, twenty-eight, twenty-nine,—*sixty.*"

XLII. *Marquis Townsend.*

Being at the levee of Lord Townsend when that nobleman was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, he thought he saw a person in his Excellency's suite whom he had known to have lived for many years a *life of expediency* in London. To convince himself of the fact, he asked his Excellency who it

was? "That is Mr. S——, one of my *gentlemen at large*," was the answer; "do you know him?"—"Oh yes! perfectly well," said Foote, "and what your Excellency tells me is *doubly* extraordinary: first, that he is *a gentleman;* and next, that *he is at large*."

XLIII. *Mrs. Reddish.*

The Mrs. Reddish who was originally Miss Hart, playing the queen in *Richard III.* one evening at Drury-lane, and being of a very coarse masculine make, a gentleman asked Foote who she was. Being told that her name was *Reddish*, he exclaimed, "Reddish! Reddish! pray what Reddish?"—"Why zounds, Sir!" said Foote, "don't you see? *Horse*-Reddish to be sure."

XLIV. *Stratford Jubilee.*

At the time of the Stratford Jubilee, planned and conducted by Garrick in honour of Shakspeare, the weather in general turned out very wet and cold, particularly the day appointed for the great dramatic procession. Garrick meeting Foote that morning in the public breakfast-room, just in the time of a

very heavy shower of rain, exclaimed, with evident chagrin, "Well, Sam, what do you think of all this?"—"Think of it!" says Foote, "why, as a *Christian* should do; I think it is *God's revenge against vanity.*"

XLV. *The same.*

Meeting with Lacy (Garrick's brother-manager,) a little before this time, they were talking of the badness of the weather, and their apprehensions of the procession-day proving wet. "And in this case," said Foote, "what will you do?"—"Do!" says Lacy, shrugging up his shoulders in his usual coarse way, "why, if the day should turn out, as you say, wet and windy, Garrick and his mummers may parade it as much as they please, but *none of the clothes shall walk.*"

XLVI. *The same.*

During this festival, which drew together most of the wits, dramatists, and *amateurs*, of Shakspeare, from every part of the three kingdoms, Foote distinguished himself, at all the public places, in a capital line of wit

and brilliancy. Being on the green one evening, rattling away in his usual manner, a large fat country squire, most gorgeously dressed out in silver-laced clothes, approached the circle with great civility, and entered into conversation with him. Foote, taking him for one of the better sort of natives of the town, thought this a good opportunity to pick up some anecdotes about Shakspeare; but the squire, to avoid a subject for which he was totally unfit, turned it off, by complaining of the badness of the roads, the extortion of the inns, bad beds, &c. "Oh! then it appears," says Foote, "you are not a native of this town."—"No, no, Sir," said the squire, "I am no native, I came all the way from Essex to see the show." "From Essex?" returned Foote (seemingly in a great surprise, and viewing him from head to heel); "and pray, Sir, let me ask you one question more: *Who drove you?*"

XLVII. *Old Scotch Prejudice.*

At a table where he dined in the interior parts of Scotland, an old lady being called upon for a toast, gave *Charles the Third*.

"Of Spain, Madam?" said Foote. "No, Sir," cried the lady, with some pettishness; "of England!"—"Poh! poh!" said one of the company, "never mind her; she is one of our old folks, who have not got rid of their political prejudices."—"Oh! dear Sir, make no apology," cried Foote; "I was prepared for all this; as from your living so far north as you do, I suppose none of you have *yet* heard of the *Revolution*."

XLVIII. *Difference of Political Opinions.*

While at Edinburgh, he was urged to *take off* Wilkes, who was at that time as obnoxious in Scotland as he was popular in England. He answered, that he had but one objection; which was, "that as he intended to *take himself off* for London in a few days, he did not choose to *sup on brick-bats and rotten eggs* the first night of his arrival in the metropolis."

XLIX. *Trees in Scotland.*

On his return from Scotland, being asked by a lady whether there was any truth in the report that there were no trees in Scotland?

"A very malicious report indeed, my lady," said he; "for, just as I was crossing Fort-patrick to Donnaghdee, I saw two black birds perched on *as fine a thistle* as ever I saw in my life."

L. *Lord Kellie.*

Foote, who lived in habits of intimacy with this nobleman, took as many liberties with his face (which somewhat resembled in appearance a meridian sun) as ever Falstaff did with his friend Bardolph's. One day his Lordship choosing to forget his promise of dining with him, it piqued him so, that he called out, loud enough to be heard by the whole coffee-house where they were sitting, "Well, my Lord; since you cannot do me the honour of dining with me to-day, will you be so good, as you ride by, just to *look over* against my south wall? for, as we have had little or no sun for this fortnight past, my peaches will want the assistance of your lordship's *countenance*."

LI. *The same.*

His Lordship having cracked some jokes upon one of his friends rather too coarsely,

an Irish gentleman, who heard of it, said, "if he had treated him so he would *pull him by the nose*."—"Pull *him* by the nose," said Foote: "you may as well thrust your hand into a furnace."

LII. *The same.*

The same noble Lord coming into the club, on a hot summer night, dressed in a somewhat tarnished suit of laced clothes, the waiter announced "Lord Kellie!"—"Lord Kellie!" repeated Foote, looking him full in the face at the same time, "I thought it was *all Monmouth-street in flames*."

LIII. *The same.*

A gentleman at Foote's table complaining that the beer was cold, "Hand the tankard then to Lord Kellie," said he, "and it will be *fire-proof* in a moment."

LIV. *Appropriate Motto.*

During one of Foote's trips to Dublin, he was much solicited by a silly young man of fashion to assist him in a miscellany of

poems and essays, which he was about to publish; but when he asked to see the manuscript, the other told him, "that at present he had only *conceived* the different subjects, but had *put none of them to paper.*" —"Oh! if that be the state of the case," replied Foote, "I will give you a motto from Milton for the work in its present state:

"*Things unattempted yet, in prose or rhyme.*"

LV. *Real Friendship.*

A young gentleman making an apology to his father for coming late to dinner, said, "that he had been visiting a poor friend of his in St. George's Fields." "Ah! a pretty kind of friend indeed," says the father, "to keep us waiting for dinner in this manner."—"Aye, and of the best kind too," said Foote; "as you know, my dear Sir, *a friend in need* is *a friend indeed.*"

LVI. *Motto for a Charlatan.*

When a celebrated empiric first set up his chariot, he consulted Foote about the

choice of a motto. "What is your crest?" said the wit. "Three *mallards*," answered the Doctor. "Why then, the motto I would recommend to you is, *Quack! quack! quack!*"

LVII. *Motto for a Physician.*

Being asked by a lady to translate a physician's motto, which was, "*A numine salus*," he quickly replied, "*God help the patient!*"

LVIII. *Sir W. W. W——.*

The first time that Foote was in company with this gentleman, who was remarkably corpulent, he was asked how he liked him. "Oh! a true Welshman," said he; "all *mountain* and *barrenness*."

LIX. *Colonel Bowden.*

Having some *pique* towards Colonel Bowden, who stuttered remarkably, he happened to cross him on the Richmond road, as he was taking a ride with a friend, "How do you do, Colonel?" says Foote's *companion*. "Pre—pre—pretty" stam-

mered the Colonel, endeavouring to say *pretty well;* when Foote desiring the post-boy to drive on, his companion exclaimed, "Why do you drive off so rudely?"—"Oh," replied Foote, "to save time; as we shall be at Hounslow before he'll be *well enough* to give you an answer."

LX. *The same.*

Bowden, who was a very fat man, being in Germany, while he was an officer in the guards, happened to be sent on what is called a *flying party,* of which he gave his father (who was nearly as fat as himself) the following laconic account:—

DEAR SIR,

Our general has thought fit to select *me* for a *flying party;* and as you seem to have the same *family talents* for enterprises of this description, I shall not be much surprised if I hear that they have engaged *you* to play *Harlequin* next winter at Drury-lane.

LXI. *The same.*

The same facetious gentleman dining one day at the house of Thrale, the member

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said the wit. "
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LVII. *Mot*

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LIX. *Co*

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*compa*nion. "Pr

"Will nobody slit that dear woman's dripping-pan for her? If they don't, poor *Britannia* will be undone."

LXIII. *The late Duke of Norfolk.*

When the late Duke of Norfolk was Mr. *Howard*, he published a book called *His Own Thoughts*, of which he promised *a second part*. Being in company with Foote some time after this at the Bedford coffee-house, he pressed our hero to give an opinion of his book, which the other at first declined; but at length, being at a loss for an excuse, he replied, "I will wait for your next book, Sir; *second thoughts are best*."

LXIV. *Lord H———.*

Sitting with Lord H——— (who was much addicted to the bottle) previously to a masquerade night, he asked Foote "what *new* character he ought to appear in?"—"New character!" said the other, pausing for some time, "suppose you go *sober*, my Lord!"

for the borough, and seeing nothing to his liking in the first course, answered only, when asked to be helped to any thing, "I will wait for something else." A neck of mutton being the last thing, he refused it also. Mrs. Thrale, in some confusion, apologized for her dinner, by saying, "that the high winds had that morning thrown down the kitchen chimney, and she was afraid there was nothing else but some pastry." Bowden, roused at this, and seeing the mutton on the point of being carried from the table, stuttered out to the servant as well as he could, "Holloa, master! bring that back again: I now begin to find it is *neck or nothing!*"

LXII. *The same.*

Bowden being in the stage-box one night when Mrs. Pritchard was playing in the masque of *Britannia*, her pasteboard armour was buckled on so tight, particularly about the neck, that she could hardly articulate her words. This created some confusion for a time; when Bowden, seeing the cause, stuttered out as loud as he could,

"Will nobody slit that dear woman's dripping-pan for her? If they don't, poor *Britannia* will be undone."

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LXV. *Dr. Arne.*

Some years ago Dr. Arne produced an *operatta* at Covent-garden Theatre, called *The Rose;* which, though full of *scriptural allusions,* was hissed off the stage the first night. Foote getting into the lobby just after its fate, was asked what he really thought of it? "Why, bating the *religion* of it," says he, "I never saw a piece so justly *damned* in all my life!"

LXVI. *Advice to a dramatic Writer.*

A dull dramatic writer, who had often felt the severity of the public, was complaining one day to Foote of the injustice done him by the critics: but added, "I have, however, one way of being even with them; which is, by constantly *laughing* at all they say."—"You do perfectly right, my friend," said Foote; "for by this method you will not only disappoint your enemies, but lead the *merriest life* of any man in England."

LXVII. *Levee-hunting.*

He used to say, "that the difference of the *hue* of a court-levee after the death of a *general officer* or of a *bishop*, was that of a lobster *before* and *after* boiling."

LXVIII. *Dr. Blair.*

When Foote first heard of Dr. Blair's writing Notes on Ossian (a work, the reality of which has been always much doubted), he observed, "the booksellers ought to allow a great discount to the purchasers; as the *notes* required such *a stretch of credit.*"

LXIX. *Merchant-taylors' Hall.*

Dining at merchant-taylors' hall, he enjoyed himself so pleasantly, that he sat till the company were much thinned; when, watching his opportunity, he rose, and with great gravity took leave by saying, "Gentlemen, I wish you *both* good night."—"Both!" echoed one of the company; "why, Foote, are you drunk? here are at

least above a dozen of us left!"—"Oh! yes," said the wit, "I know that: there are just *eighteen;* but as nine taylors only make a man, I wish to be correct; therefore, as I said before, gentlemen, I wish you *both* good night."

LXX. *The difference of Exchange.*

Dining at a nobleman's table, where the company were praising the claret, his Lordship told them that he had received that hogshead of wine in return for a couple of hounds, which he some time before presented to Count Lauragais."—"Why then, my Lord," cried Foote, "I not only think your wine excellent, but *dog-cheap.*"

LXXI. *Lady A——.*

Meeting with Lady A—— at Brighton, he asked her what brought her there? "Why really," said she, "I don't well know: *mere wantonness,* I believe."—"And pray, my Lady, *have you been cured yet?*"

LXXII. *A good Memory.*

A lady who had made several *faux pas* in life, being afterwards married very happily, a company of friends were talking over the circumstance, and mentioning that she had the frankness to tell her husband, before marriage, *all* that had happened. "What candour! what honesty!" added they. "Yes," cried Foote, joining in the general praise; "and what an *amazing memory* too!"

LXXIII. *Lady S———.*

Lady S———, who lived in good health and spirits to the great age of ninety-two, was asked, when eighty-four, at what time of life the passion of love generally fails. "That," said she, "is a *question of experience*, which I cannot *at present* determine!"

LXXIV. *Second Appearance.*

A young lady having made her *debût* at the Haymarket Theatre with very indif-

ferent success, and being of course laid on the shelf, was every now and then soliciting Foote to know "when she should make her next appearance?"—"Your next appearance?" said he one day, musing: "let me see: why, Madam, by the time the public have forgotten your first."

LXXV. *Gratitude of Players.*

A person abusing the players in general one night in company with Foote, said, among other coarse things, "that they had not even one grain of *gratitude* about them."—"Nay, now," said Foote, "you are too severe upon the profession; for, to my certain knowledge, there are no people more distressed at *benefits forgotten.*"

LXXVI. *The Mind an Improver of the Features.*

It being observed by a lady how much better a female of their mutual acquaintance, who had been raised from a humble situation, looked than she did a dozen years before: "Very true," said Foote;

" but consider the *education of her face* since that time."

LXXVII. *Parliamentary Oratory.*

A young member of parliament having made a long *declamatory* speech, his uncle asked Foote " how he liked it? and whether he did not think posterity would speak of it?"—" Oh! no doubt, no doubt," said he, wishing to get rid of the subject. " Well," continued the other, " but what do you think they will say?"—" Will say?" returned he, pausing; " why, they must say, if they do the young gentleman justice, that he *once flourished in parliament!*"

LXXVIII. *The same.*

On the same young gentleman, who was rather *backward in paying his debts,* he said " he was a *very promising* young man."

LXXIX. *Irish Peasantry.*

When Foote was in Ireland, on seeing the wretched appearance of the peasantry

there, particularly in regard to their apparel, he observed, "that he never knew before what the beggars in England did with their *cast off clothes.*"

LXXX. *Surgeon-general A——r.*

Mr. A——r, then a handsome young surgeon in the army, was suspected of an intrigue with a married woman of high fashion; and the report was, "that he was caught in her very bed-chamber at an unseasonable hour of the night." Her friends, however, endeavoured to get rid of it, by saying, that "the lady having borrowed a very scarce book, pledged herself to return it the next morning; and therefore got young A——r to read it to her." This apology every body understood as they liked; Foote, however, vindicated the lady's honour very strenuously, by saying, "she was not only totally innocent of the charge, but he could mention the very book they were reading together; namely, *The Christian's Daily Practice, in sheets.*"

LXXXI. *Quin.*

When Quin first heard of Foote's success in *giving tea* at the Haymarket, he said, in his sarcastical manner, "he was glad of it; for now, poor devil! we may expect to see him with a clean shirt on." Foote, hearing of this, charged him one night at the Bedford with taking such a liberty with him, as to say "he should now wear *clean shirts.*"—"No, Sir," says Quin, very gravely, "I did not say *shirts,* I said *shirt:* when I spoke of you on this subject, I could not be so *ignorant* as to use the *plural number.*"

LXXXII. *Jealous Doubts.*

Foote had two natural children, to whom he was much attached. As they were playing about his knees one evening after dinner, a French gentleman present asked him, "Sont-ils par la *même mere,* Monsieur?"—"Oui, Monsieur," replied he; "by the *same mare,* but I have strong doubts whether by the *same horse.*"

LXXXIII. *The same.*

The mother of the above children was a servant of his, who lived with him for several years; but, on one of his trips to Paris, went off with a *bass viol* player belonging to the Opera house. On his return, he never looked after her, but enjoyed himself as if nothing of the kind had happened. The lady however, feeling either remorse, or perhaps the want of her former good establishment, solicited strongly to be restored; alleging, "that though she had left his house, not knowing when he would return, she had done nothing to forfeit his esteem." —"What, Madam!" said he, "done nothing to forfeit my esteem! Have you not been *base*-ly *viol*-ated? and now do you want to run *your gamut* upon me?"

LXXXIV. *Mutability of this World.*

Being at dinner in a mixed company soon after the bankruptcy of one friend and the death of another, the conversation naturally *turned* on the mutability of the world.

"Can you account for this?" said S—tt, a master-builder, who happened to sit next to Foote.—"Why, not very clearly," said the other: "except we could suppose *the world was built by contract.*"

LXXXV. *Garrick.*

Garrick attending the rehearsal of *Venice Preserved,* when a new actress highly recommended to him was to make her *debût* in *Belvidera,* she repeated that tender exclamation, "Would you kill my father, Jaffier?" with so much *sang froid* in her voice and countenance, that, after several attempts to set her right, he whispered her, nearly in the same tone, "Can you chop cabbage, Madam?"

LXXXVI. *The Situation of the Grafton Ministry.*

A gentleman coming into the Cocoa-tree one morning during the Duke of Grafton's administration, was observing, "that he was afraid the poor ministry were at their *wit's end.*"—"Well, if it it should be so,"

said Foote, "what reason have they to complain of so *short a journey?*"

LXXXVII. *Churchill.*

Being asked his opinion of Churchill the poet, he said that Lilly the grammarian had already given his character in one line with great accuracy:

"*Bifrons, atque custos; bos, fur, sus, atque sacerdos**."

LXXXVIII. *Hugh Kelly.*

Hugh Kelly, the author of *False Delicacy, &c.*, dining with Foote one day, in passing through the drawing-room, looked into the library; and, being surprised at the smallness of the collection (the principal

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* Which line Mr. Gostling, a clergyman of Canterbury, has parodied in the following humorous manner:—

Bifrons—not living as he preaches;
Custos—of all that in his reach is;
Bos—when among his neighbours' wives;
Fur—when a gathering-in his tithes;
Sus—sitting at a parish-feast;
Sacerdos last, a *finish'd priest.*

part of his books being at North-end), rather triumphantly exclaimed, "Why, heyday! I have got almost as many books myself!"—"Perhaps you may, Sir," said the other; "but consider, you *read* all that you *write*."

LXXXIX. *The same.*

The same author was boasting, that, as a *reviewer*, he had the power of distributing literary reputation as he liked.—"Take care," said Foote, "you are not too prodigal of that, *or you may leave none for yourself*."

XC. *Spirits.*

A very *thin* lady seriously asked Foote whether he believed *in spirits?*—"Aye, Madam," replied he, looking her full in the face, "*as sure as you are there.*"

XCI. *Grecian Drama.*

Foote told Lord Carlisle, that he once had it in contemplation to bring out a

piece in order to ridicule the absurdities of the Grecian Drama.

His plan was as follows:—He was to introduce but one personage, who was to be a mock despotic monarch, attended by a chorus of tinkers, taylors, blacksmiths, musicians, bakers, &c. This character was to strut about the stage, boast of the unlimited extent of his imperial power, threaten all with fire and sword, take the city of London, storm the Tower, and even threaten to dethrone the sovereign himself.

The Chorus, terrified at these exploits and menaces, were then to fall upon their knees, tear their hair, beat their breasts, and supplicate his imperial highness to spare the effusion of so much human blood; to which, after a conflict of contending passions during the course of five acts, the hero was to agree, and the piece was then to conclude with a full hymn of thanksgiving for the deliverance of so many individuals *.

* With all deference to Foote's comic abilities, it may be thought that a drama founded on this model

XCII. *A Method to avoid Duelling.*

Dining at the house of a nobleman who gave him a *bad dinner* and *worse wine,* but who had happened to fight a duel some time before, he was afterwards asked how he liked his reception. "Oh!" said he, "that fellow should never ask any body to his house but his *antagonists,* as then he might *poison them* without *running the risk of his own life.*"

XCIII. *A new Taste for Literature.*

A great epicure having bought a library, a person was wondering what he could do with it, as he was well known to prefer a *good table* to all the books in the world. "It may be partly for that reason," said Foote; "for the *Table of Contents.*"

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would not generally succeed. The far greater part of an audience know nothing of the *Grecian unities,* which this piece was intended to ridicule; therefore though it might gratify *a few* among the number of scholars and men of taste, the mass of the audience, not understanding the *original,* would, of course, have very little relish for the *caricature.*

XCIV. *Dr. Johnson.*

Dr. Johnson, being asked by a lady why he so constantly gave money to beggars, replied with great feeling, "Madam, to enable them to beg on."

XCV. *The Graces.*

Of an actress who was *remarkably awkward with her arms,* Foote said, "she kept the *Graces at arm's-length.*"

XCVI. *Rich, the Manager.*

Rich, the patentee of Covent-garden Theatre, had many eccentricities of character; and one of the number was his constant forgetfulness of the names of his performers, as well as those of his most intimate friends. In a conversation one day with Foote, he called him "Muster Footy." The other looking grave upon this, Rich made an apology; and said, "he was so unfortunately absent in that respect, that it *was no* unusual thing in him to forget his

own name."—"Why, that is singular enough," said Foote; "for though I knew you could *never write* it, I did not think you could forget it."

XCVII. *Mode of Burying Attorneys in London.*

A gentleman in the country who had just buried a rich relation, who was an attorney, was complaining to Foote, who happened to be on a visit with him, of the very great expenses of a country funeral, in respect to carriages, hatbands, scarves, &c. "Why, do you bury your attorneys here?" asked Foote, gravely. "Yes, to be sure we do: how else?"—"Oh! we never do that in London." "No!" said the other, much surprised; "how do you manage?"—"Why, when the patient happens to die, we lay him out in a room over night by himself, lock the door, throw open the sash, and in the morning he is entirely off."—"Indeed!" said the other in amazement; "what becomes of him?" "Why, that we cannot exactly tell, not being acquainted with supernatural causes. All

that we know of the matter is, that there's a *strong smell of brimstone in the room the next morning.*"

XCVIII. *Conjugal Love.*

A person praising the affections of the widows of Malabar, who burn themselves on a funeral pile in honour of their husbands' memory; Foote observed, "that the women of England claimed a higher honour; for they frequently *burned* before marriage for their *first husband,* and afterwards for a *second.*"

XCIX. *How to repair a House.*

A friend telling Foote that he had just purchased a house which he thought a good bargain, though he doubted, from its being so old, whether it would stand the lease; "What sort of next-door neighbours have you?" demanded he.—"Why, what have my next-door neighbours to say to my house?"—"More than you seem aware of; for by your own account, a great deal of your

safety depends upon their being *good house-holders.*"

c. *Sir Joseph M——.*

The above baronet, who was a *distiller* by profession, having made a speech in parliament in favour of administration, in the course of which, as the lawyers say, "he proved rather too much," the opposition next day were jesting with Foote about it. "Ah!" said the latter, "Sir Joseph would be a very good kind of man, if he would only bring out with him, what he generally leaves at home,—a *still-head.*"

ci. *Garrick.*

The Lying Valet being one night added as an after-piece to the admirable comedy of *The Devil upon Two Sticks,* Garrick, coming into the green-room, cried out to Foote, "Well, Sam! I see, after all, you are glad to take up with one of my farces."—"Why, yes, David," said the other, "what could I do better? I must have some *ventilator* for this excessive hot weather."

CII. *Duke of Leinster.*

Foote, dining one gala day at the Duke of Leinster's in Dublin, where all the *family plate* was brought out, and the table covered with a *profusion of made dishes*, happened on the same night to sup at the Countess of Brandon's; who, seeing him eat rather heartily, cried out, "Why, Foote, I thought you dined with the duke to-day, who entertains in the grandest style of any man in Ireland?"—"That may be so, my lady; but it is not in my style to dine in a *silversmith's shop* and have all the victuals brought from the *apothecary's*."

CIII. *Dibble Davis.*

The players rallying Dibble Davis one morning in the green-room on the awkward cut of a new coat, he apologized for his own taste by saying "it was the *fault* of his taylor."—"Yes," said Foote, "poor man; and his *misfortune* too."

CIV. *Theophilus Cibber.*

The following similar anecdote is told of Theophilus Cibber. His father, seeing him dressed out in a superb suit of clothes one morning in the green-room, lifted up his eyes in surprise (knowing the deranged state of his finances), and exclaimed: "Oh, The, The! I really pity you."—"Pity *me*, father!" said The, coolly surveying himself in the glass, "you had better pity my taylor."

CV. *Hypocrisy.*

A person of rather doubtful integrity was bragging to Foote, "that however other people might act, he had the satisfaction to feel that his *heart* always lay at his *tongue's end.*" —"I always thought so," said the other; "as I knew it never lie in *the right place.*"

CVI. *Doctor B——r.*

An apothecary in Cheapside, during a violent influenza, exhibited at his shop window "The four-thieves' vinegar sold

here*." This being observed by a physician of Foote's acquaintance who used the shop, he carelessly asked the apothecary "how long it was since he took in *three* partners?" The apothecary assuring him that he stood alone in the firm of the house, the doctor took him to his window, and recommended to him "*to deceive the public no longer.*"

CVII. *The same.*

The same physician being at Batson's coffee house (a house well known to be long and much frequented by the faculty), a gentleman happened to call out for a *weak doctor,* (a glass of rum and milk was then known by this name). "Waiter," said the physician, "don't you hear what the gentle-

* It is said that, during the great plague in London, four thieves, availing themselves of the public calamity, took that opportunity to plunder the houses of the dead and dying, yet, notwithstanding, escaped the infection themselves. On its being inquired how they thus ensured their own safety, it was found, that they constantly carried about them sponges of prepared vinegar; which preparation future apothecaries adopted in all infectious times, and sold under the denomination of "the four-thieves' vinegar."

man calls for?"—"Yes, Sir, and I am *making* one as fast as possible."—"Making one, you blockhead!" said the other; "why give yourself so much trouble? when, if you'll but go to the upper end of the room, you'll find enough *ready made* to your hand."

CVIII. *The Bath Apothecary.*

Foote riding out on the Downs near Bath in company with a friend, they observed at some distance a person coming towards them, who appeared to be dressed out *in gold lace.* "What beau on horseback is this?" said the friend: "Psha!" (on his coming a little closer), "'tis no body, after all, but the little quicksilver apothecary with his tawdry waistcoat."—"Be a little more circumspect for the future," said Foote, "as you see it is not *all gold that glisters.*"

CIX. *The Apothecary outwitted.*

A gentleman having a rich aunt (to whom he was presumptive heir) very much in the hands of her apothecary; who not only laid

her under an annual contribution for medicines she little wanted, but frequently meddled in family affairs; at last took a resolution to retaliate on him in the following manner:—

He called upon him one day, seemingly in a violent passion; and after reprobating him for the various impositions practised on his relation, added: "But this is not the worst of it, Sir: not satisfied with imposing on her credulity in expensive and unavailing medicines, I find you have had influence enough to prevail on her to bequeath you two thousand pounds legacy in her will, to the absolute robbery of me and my family."

This last piece of news, though pleasing to the apothecary's ear, he most strenuously denied having the least knowledge of. "Well, well," continued the other, "you may go on a little longer, but my father will be in town in about a fortnight's time; and then, as much as you may plume yourself on your hypocrisy, the will shall be entirely altered."

"And now," said Foote (who generally told this story in the company of some me-

dical man), "what do you think was the consequence?"—"Why, the old joke, that the lady, leaving off medicine, recovered of her *maladie imaginaire*."—"No such thing, I assure you; the apothecary was too wise to trust to so *common* a case: for, understanding that his patient's brother was coming to town in a fortnight in order to alter the will, which he supposed was in his favour, he took care the sister *should die before that time*. But, alas! when the will came to be opened, there was no legacy for the doctor, so that he had nothing but the *murder* to console him for his ingenuity."

CX. *Affectation.*

An assuming pedantic lady boasting of the many books which she had read, often quoted *Locke upon Understanding*; "a work," she said, "she admired above all things; yet there was one word in it, which, though often repeated, she could not distinctly make out; and that was, the word *ide-a*" (pronouncing it very long); "but I

suppose it comes from a Greek derivation." —"You are perfectly right, Madam," said Foote; "it comes from the word *ideaousky*."—"And pray, Sir, what does that mean?"—"The *feminine of ideot*, Madam."

CXI. *Extreme Avarice.*

A person talking of an acquaintance of his, who was so avaricious as even to lament the prospect of his funeral expenses, though a short time before he had been censuring one of his own relations for his parsimonious temper: "Now is it not strange," continued he, "that this man would not *take the beam out of his own eye* before he attempted the *mote* in other people's?"—"Why, so I dare say he would," cried Foote, "if he was sure *of selling the timber*."

CXII. *Physiognomy.*

Being asked whether the infant child of a very weak father did not carry a corresponding likeness, he replied: "I am not so great

a physiognomist as to know whether the father is like the child; but this I know, there is a *great deal of the child* in the father."

CXIII. *The Fate of Men of Genius.*

(A conversation piece.)

Plautus turned a mill. Terence was a slave. Boethius died in a jail. Paulo Borghese, though he had fifteen different trades, yet starved with them all. Tasso was often distressed for five shillings. Servin (one of the *suite* of Maximilian, duke of Sully, in his embassy to England during the reign of James the First; and one of the most learned and accomplished men of his age) died drunk in a common brothel. Bentivoglio was refused admittance into the very hospital which he erected. Edmund Allen, the celebrated actor and cotemporary of Shakspeare, died in a similar institution of his own.

Corneille, the great French dramatic writer, was so poor, that he has been seen in

very old age standing at the entrance of a cobler's stall with only one shoe on, while the other was mending; and Racine left his family in such distress as to be supported by a pension which his friends solicited for them. Crichton (by way of distinction called *the admirable Crichton*, of whom more will be said below in page 130), who was the most accomplished, as well as the most learned and dissipated man of his time, lived on the supply of the day, and at length lost his life in a midnight brawl in the public street.

Butler's talents, though the delight of the age he lived in, and his immortal work the principal subject of the court conversation, was never master of fifty pounds*. Otway is said to have died of hunger; Camoens ended his days in an hospital; and Vauglas left his body to the surgeons to pay his debts.

* Butler lived on, neglected, for some time after the publication of his Hudibras; though the king and courtiers had his work so much in their memory, that they scarcely quoted any other book. At last the duke

CXIV. *In continuation, by the Editor.*

Cervantes*, the celebrated author of Don Quixotte, after being imprisoned, and meeting many unaccountable slights and hardships, died for want. Churchill died a beggar: Lloyd, his friend and *brother* patriot, died in the Fleet; where he previously existed for some years by soliciting daily charity, and subscriptions for works which he never meant to publish. Bickerstaff ran away as much for debt as for the crime imputed to him. Dr. Goldsmith was nearly two thousand pounds in debt when he died; and Hugh Kelly, author of *False*

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of Buckingham, urged by the remonstrances of Wycherly, agreed to spend an evening with Butler at a tavern, as introductory to relieving him from all his wants. The evening arrived; but scarcely was the duke seated, when he spied an *impure* of his acquaintance crossing the opposite room. This circumstance was irresistible to the duke: he immediately followed her, and never saw Butler afterwards.

* Cervantes died on the 23d of April, 1616, the very day which closed the life of our immortal Shakspeare; perhaps the literary world never before suffered such a loss at once.

Delicay, &c. died in just the same condition.

Dr. Paul Hiffernan, an author well known about the same period, contracted his last illness, which was a jaundice, from mere want, and was then supported by a friendly subscription.

Purdon, though bred at Trinity college, Dublin, and always considered as a good scholar and a man of taste, was so dissipated, that, after subsisting for many years as a bookseller's hack, he ended his days in an hospital.

Jones, author of *The Earl of Essex*, &c., being run over by a night-cart in the street, was carried to an hospital (for want of any other lodging), and was supported there by the master of the Bedford coffee-house till he died.

Boyce, one of the earliest cotemporaries of Dr. Johnson, and originally a writer with him in the Gentleman's Magazine, expired in a miserable garret on Tower-hill.

Sterne, the celebrated author of *Tristram Shandy*, though his works sold uncommonly

well, and his income as a clergyman, together with his reputation as a writer, might have commanded respect and independence, left a wife and daughter in great distress, dying seven hundred pounds in debt.

Mrs. Manley, the author of the original *Atalantis*, and the *protegée* of Swift, Steele, Prior, &c., finally subsisted on the bounty of alderman Barber: while Floyer Sydenham, the learned and elegant translator of Plato, was latterly supported by one Nott, a publican near Temple Bar; who having known him in better days, kindly remembered him in the time of sickness and misfortune.

To this melancholy catalogue we may add the subject of these Memoirs; who, though the heir and possessor of three successive fortunes, and the natural inheritor of as much wit and humour as perhaps ever fell to the lot of one man, yet was so thoughtless about pecuniary affairs, that he was often at a loss for the supply of the day which was passing over him; and, except the income which he derived from the sale of his theatre, and which died with him, he did not

leave as much behind him as discharged his funeral expenses.

CXV. *Literary Anecdotes.*

In a miscellany like this, where we are occasionally rambling over the flowers of genius and the fates of literary men, no apology will perhaps be necessary for introducing the following anecdotes, not generally known, relative to some of the above-mentioned extraordinary characters.

Servin.

When Maximilian Berthune, duke of Sully, and chief minister to Henry IVth of France, was coming over ambassador to England in the year 1603, he had in his *suite* (which consisted of above two hundred persons, mostly of distinction) a young man of the name of Servin; whose character is so very extraordinary, that nothing less than the pen of the noble and respectable historian himself can render it credible.

"The beginning of June," says he, "I

set out from Calais, where I was to embark, having with me a retinue of above two hundred gentlemen (or who called themselves such), and of whom a considerable number were really of the first distinction. Just before my departure, old Servin came and presented his son to me, begging that I would use my endeavours to make him a man of some worth and honesty, though he confessed it was what he dared not hope; —not through any want of capacity in the young man, but from his natural inclination to all kinds of vice.

"The father was in the right. What he told me having excited my curiosity to gain a thorough knowledge of young Servin, I found him to be at once a *wonder* and a *monster*; for I can give no other idea of that assemblage of the most excellent and the most pernicious qualities.

"Let the reader represent to himself a man of genius so lively, and an understanding so extensive, as rendered him scarcely ignorant of any thing that could be known; of so vast and ready a com-

prehension, that he immediately made himself master of whatever he attempted; and so prodigious a memory, that he never forgot what he once learned. He was master of every part of philosophy and the mathematics, particularly fortification and drawing. Even in theology he was so well skilled, that he was an excellent preacher whenever he chose to exert that talent, and an able disputant either for, or against the reformed religion. He not only understood Greek, Hebrew, and all the languages which we call *learned*, but likewise all the different jargons, or modern dialects: he accented and pronounced them so naturally, and so perfectly imitated the gestures and manners both of the several nations of Europe and of the particular provinces of France, that he might be taken for a native of all, or any of those countries; and this quality he applied to counterfeit all sorts of persons, in which he succeeded wonderfully.

" He was, beside, the best comedian, and greatest buffoon, that perhaps ever ap-

peared. He had a genius for poetry, and had written many verses. He played upon almost all instruments, was a perfect master of music, and sung most agreeably and justly. He likewise could say mass, for he was of a disposition to do, as well as to know all things. His body was well suited to his mind: he was light, nimble, dexterous, and fit for every kind of exercise. He could ride well; and in dancing, wrestling, and leaping, he was as much admired. There are not many games of entertainment that he did not know, and he was skilled in almost all the mechanic arts.

"But now for the reverse of the medal.—He was treacherous, cruel, cowardly, and deceitful: a liar, a cheat, a drunkard, and a glutton: a sharper in play, immersed in every species of vice, a blasphemer, and an atheist. In a word; in him may be found all the vices contrary to nature, honour, religion, or society: the truth of which he evinced with his latest breath; as he died in the flower of his age, in a common brothel, entirely corrupted by his debaucheries; and

expired with a glass in his hand, cursing and denying God!"

James Crichton.

Among the favourites of nature that have from time to time appeared in the world, enriched with various endowments, and contrarieties of excellence, none seems to have been more exalted above the common rate of humanity than the man known, about two centuries and a half ago, by the appellation of *The admirable Crichton;* of whose history, whatever may be rejected as surpassing credibility, yet I shall, upon respectable authority, relate enough to rank him in the number of the prodigies of the human race.

"Virtue, says Virgil, is better accepted when it comes in a pleasing form.—The person of Crichton was eminently beautiful: but his beauty was consistent with such activity and strength, that, in fencing, he could spring at one bound the length of twenty feet upon his antagonist; and he used the sword in either hand with

such force and dexterity, that scarcely any one had courage to engage him.

" Having studied at St. Andrew's in Scotland, he went to Paris in his twenty-first year, and affixed on the gate of the college of Navarre a kind of challenge to the learned of that university, to dispute with them on a certain day; offering to his opponents, whoever they should be, the choice of ten languages, and of all the faculties and sciences. On the day appointed, three thousand auditors assembled: when four doctors of the church, and fifty ministers, appeared against him; and one of his antagonists confesses, 'That the doctors were defeated; that he gave proofs of knowledge seemingly above the reach of man; and that a hundred years passed without food, or sleep, it was thought, would not be sufficient for the attainment of his learning.' After a disputation of nine hours, he was presented, by the president and professors, with a diamond and a purse of gold, and dismissed with repeated acclamations.

" From Paris he went to Rome: where

he made the same challenge; and had, in the presence of the pope and the cardinals, the same success. Afterwards he contracted at Venice an acquaintance with Aldus Manutius, by whom he was introduced to the learned of that city. He then visited Padua, where he engaged in another public disputation; beginning his performance with an *extempore* poem in praise of the city and the assembly present, and concluding with an oration, equally unpremeditated, in praise of ignorance.

"He then published another challenge; in which he declared himself ready to detect the errors of Aristotle, and all his commentators, either in the common forms of logic, or in any way which his antagonists should propose of a hundred different kinds of verse.

"These acquisitions of learning, however stupendous, were not gained at the expense of any pleasure in which youth generally indulges, or by the omission of any accomplishment in which it becomes a gentleman to excel. He practised in great perfection the arts of drawing and painting.

He was an eminent performer in both vocal and instrumental music. He danced with uncommon gracefulness: and, on the day of his disputation at Paris, exhibited his skill in horsemanship, before the court of France; where, at a public match of tilting, he bore away the ring upon his lance fifteen times together.

"He likewise excelled in domestic games of less dignity and reputation: and in the interval between his challenge and disputation at Paris, he spent so much of his time at cards, dice, and tennis, that a lampoon was fixed upon the gate of the Sorbonne, directing those who would see this monster of erudition, to look for him at the taverns.

"So extensive was his acquaintance with life and manners, that in an Italian comedy composed by himself, and exhibited before the court of Mantua, he is said to have personated fifteen different characters: in all of which he might succeed without great difficulty; since he had such powers of retention, that by once hearing an oration of

an hour's length, he could repeat it exactly, and in the recital follow the speaker through all his variety of tone and gesticulation.

" Nor was his skill in arms less than in learning, or his courage inferior to his skill. There was a prize-fighter at Mantua, who, travelling about the world, according to the barbarous custom of that age, as a general challenger, had defeated the most celebrated masters in many parts of Europe; and in Mantua, where he then resided, had killed three antagonists. The duke repented that he had granted him his protection; when Crichton, looking on his sanguinary success with indignation, offered to stake fifteen hundred pistoles, and mount the stage against him.

" The duke with some reluctance consented to this proposal; and the day being fixed, the combatants appeared. Their weapon seems to have been the single rapier, which was then newly introduced in Italy. The prize-fighter advanced with great violence and firmness; while the other contented himself by calmly parrying his passes,

and suffering him to exhaust his vigour by his own fury. Then Crichton became the assailant; and pressed upon him with such force and agility, that he thrust him thrice through the body, and saw him expire at his feet. He divided the prize which he had won, among the widows whose husbands had been killed by his opponent.

"The death of this wonderful man I should be willing to conceal, did I not know that every reader will inquire curiously after that fatal hour which is common to all human beings, however distinguished from each other by nature or by fortune.

"The duke of Mantua, having received so many proofs of his various merit, made him tutor to his son Don Vincenito de Gonzago, a prince of loose manners and turbulent disposition. On this occasion it was that he composed the comedy in which he exhibited so many different characters with exact propriety. But this honour was of short continuance; for as he was one night, in the time of the carnival, rambling about the streets with his guitar in his haud, he

was attacked by six men masked. Neither his courage nor his skill, in this exigence, deserted him: he opposed them with such dexterity and spirit, that he soon dispersed them, and disarmed their leader; who, throwing off his mask, discovered himself to be the prince his pupil. Crichton, falling on his knees, took his own sword by the point, and presented it to the prince: who immediately seized it, and,—instigated, as some say, by jealousy; according to others, only by drunken fury and brutal resentment, —plunged it in his heart.

"Thus was the admirable Crichton brought into that state in which he could excel the meanest of mankind by only a few empty honours paid to his memory. The court of Mantua testified their esteem for him by a public mourning; the cotemporary wits were profuse of their encomiums; and the palaces of Italy were adorned with pictures representing him on horseback, with a lance in one hand and a book in the other."

Such is the account which Dr. Hawkesworth gives of this extraordinary man; who

was killed, as above described, in 1558. There are other accounts of him: by Mackenzie, in his history of Scotch writers; and by Bishop Tanner, in his Bibliotheca; who both describe him as a real character of most uncommon abilities. There is a picture of him in the possession of Lord Ellicock, a lord of session in Edinburgh; but the only pieces of his writing remaining, are two copies of verses in the "*Deliciæ Poetarum Scotorum.*"

Otway.

The history of this justly-celebrated but unfortunate man, is too well known to need a general description in this miscellany; but the following curious particulars (supposed to be the *memoranda* of Southern, a contemporary dramatic writer) must not be omitted:—

"Otway, and Elkanah Settle (the antagonist of Dryden, and last of the city-poets), ran away from Oxford together, with a company of strolling players. Otway went to Christ-church in 1669, and performed a

part in the play of *The Jealous Bridegroom* in 1671-2.

"In his person he was of the middle size, about five feet seven inches high, and inclinable to fatness. He had a thoughtful expressive eye, and that was all. He gave himself up very early to drinking: and, like the generality of the unhappy wits of that age, passed his days between rioting and fasting, ranting and jollity, profligacy and penitence; carousing a week with Lord Plymouth, and then starving a month in low company. He lodged at an obscure ale-house on Tower-hill, where he died in great distress.

Mrs. Manly.

This lady, who was celebrated in her time among the novelists and dramatic writers of the profligate age of Charles the Second, was the daughter of Sir Roger Manly; and was born in one of the islands of Hampshire, of which her father was governor, and which once belonged to France.

Swift speaks of her as "a very decent woman, possessed of generous principles for one of her sort, with a great deal of good sense and invention;" and in another place he calls her "one of his best under-spur-leathers to his political pamphlets." And yet he knew little of her private history, or rather affected not to know it, for he otherwise could not have spoken so favourably of her: but she was a violent tory, and assisted him in writing *The Examiners*, and these were sufficient claims to his good opinion.

In his journal to Stella, he again speaks of Mrs. Manly's assistance to him; and of his frequently locking her up in a room, when any body broke in upon him: with a number of other little particulars, which would induce much suspicion of something beyond a political nature, did not Swift's decided character relative to the sex fully exculpate him. But the fact was, that far from Mrs. Manly being of even a decent character, she was well known to be a dissolute woman, who was charged by the duchess of Cleveland (mistress to Charles

the Second, and whose patronage she enjoyed for some time) with carrying on an intrigue with her son. Whether this was strictly true or not, cannot now be determined; but that she was a confidential agent in carrying on the duchess of Cleveland's amours, appears by some papers in a chancery suit in which her patrons were concerned.

Her principal work, independent of her plays, was *The New Atalantis*, in four volumes; in which she took liberties not only with her own sex, in her luxurious description of love-adventures, but also with the political characters of many of the distinguished whig personages of those times.

Grown old and poor, she was taken into the house of Alderman Barber (Swift's former printer, and the general printer to the tory party); who perhaps found in the protection of her the best preservative against the exposure of many political secrets which she probably was in the possession of, and which "her poverty and not her will" might otherwise induce her to divulge. She died

on the 11th of June, 1724, at Barber's house, aged about sixty-four.

Mrs. Manly was a favourite not only with the beaus of her time, but also with the wits and philosophers, such as Swift, Bolingbroke, Steele, Prior, &c. She dedicated her tragedy of *Lucius, the first Christian King of Britain,* to Sir Richard Steele; who wrote the prologue for her (though she had abused him, some years before, in her *New Atalantis*), and Prior wrote the epilogue.

Her father is supposed to have been the author of *The Turkish Spy;* a work which has undergone many editions, and is much valued for the anecdotes and private history, foreign and domestic, which it contains.

Churchill.

Of this poet,—who has *flourished,* and *almost faded,* in our day,—the following particulars are but very little known, and, I believe, never before published.

Soon after the publication of his *Rosciad* (a poem which, however meritorious in

some particulars, contains many illiberal and partial criticisms), he was sitting one night at the Rose tavern, in company with the late Mat. Clarke, of Covent-garden theatre; when Churchill, who was intoxicated with the applause given him by his flatterers, was repeating with great energy some parts of this poem. "Ah!" said Clarke, "this may be sport to you, but you should consider it is death to a great many of my brother-performers."—"Pooh! pooh!" cried the other; "they are fair game for a satirist!"—"You may think so," said Clarke; "but if you mentioned me in the manner you have some of them, I would have shown you the difference."—"Why, what would you do?"—"Only knock you down," said Clarke, "the very first place I saw you in." Here Churchill retired a few paces, and put himself into a pugilistic attitude; which Clarke perceiving, he snatched up a case-knife in one hand, and a corner of the cloth which was laid for supper in the other, and then exclaimed, "Come, come; none of your bullying

tricks with me: if you have a mind to see what I can do, take that knife and the other end of the cloth, and let us fairly see who is the best man, the player or the libeller." Terrified at this fierce and very unexpected onset, Churchill paused for some time; then taking him by the hand, said, "he was a manly fellow, and the last person in the world to whom he would willingly give offence."

Churchill evidently took Dryden for his model in poetry; and his genius seemed to incline more to the strong and energetic, than to the correct and harmonious style. But his defect was, that he did not sufficiently blend them to give perfection to the former. His usual manner of composing was this, as I have often heard it from his first publisher: After he had finally resolved upon a subject, he rambled about the fields alone for some hours, till he had accumulated as many ideas relative to the matter as he could: he then retired to his study, threw the whole upon paper, and, after a very few corrections, offered his work

to the bookseller. Some of his lighter works were published in this careless manner: but his friend Wilkes soon put a stop to such a proceeding; which, he justly observed, would soon ruin him in his reputation, both with his party and with the public at large. The hasty temper of Churchill did not like to be sent back so often to the *anvil* (as he called it); but Wilkes was peremptory, and the other acquiesced.

His *Prophecy of Famine*, which is undoubtedly one of his most finished productions, Wilkes made him correct three different times; and when he brought it in its last improved state, "Yes," said he, "Charles: now, you may depend upon it, it will do; as it is at once personal, poetical, and political."

The following anecdote of Churchill, *told by himself* in a mixed company at the table of Flexney his bookseller, will show at once the very great imprudence and dissipation of his character:—

Having occasion to settle with his publisher, from whom he received above sixty

pounds, he staid so late, and got so completely drunk,

"His usual custom in the afternoon,"

that he could not be persuaded to take a coach, or suffer any one to see him home. In this condition he staggered down to Charing-cross; where he fell in company with an unhappy female of the lowest description, and from that moment forgot every other circumstance which occurred till the next morning,—when he found himself awakened by a very strong and unusual heat playing upon his face and eyes. Not knowing where he was, he stretched out his hand, to feel whether any chair was near him; but instead of a chair, he grasped a root with some fresh earth loosely attached to it. This alarmed him; suddenly starting up, he found himself in an asparagus-bed at Battersea, with a wretched trull fast asleep beside him.

His first recollection was about his money; when he exclaimed to her with an oath, "You have picked my pockets, and I suppose brought me here to murder me!" The woman, awaking at this

instant, denied the charge; and requested he would count his money, and he would find it all right. Upon examination it proved so: his companion then recounted the adventures of the preceding night, which were as follow:—"that after he had picked her up at Charing-cross, she had knocked at several doors in order to get a bed; but the people, seeing him so drunk and herself so miserable in her appearance, refused them admittance. She then, as her last resource (it being a fine harvest moon), took him to Battersea-fields; where she often, from her necessities, had been obliged to make use of the same lodging."—"I was so struck with the fidelity and disinterestedness of this woman's conduct," added Churchill, "that I immediately gave her three guineas, took down her name, and directed her to call on me in a week's time, when I got her admitted into the Magdalen."

When Lloyd was confined in the Fleet, Churchill commissioned his publisher (Kearsley) to allow him a guinea a week; which was punctually paid till the death of Church-

ill, when Kearsley suffered in common with the other creditors.

The death of this very eccentric man was as unaccountable as his life. He set out, in 1763, on a visit to his friend Wilkes, who was then in Paris; but stopping at Boulogne, he contracted a miliary fever, which every day growing worse and worse, his friends persuaded him to make a will. This, with great formality, he set up in his bed to do: and bequeathed annuities to the amount of a hundred and ten pounds; though at the same time, if he gave himself the trouble to consider, he would have known that he had not a single guinea (independent of the future sale of his works) that he could call his own.

In this state he had a wish to return to England, which his friends imprudently indulged; but the removal from a warm bed to the inclemencies of a sea voyage, terminated his life a few hours after he had landed at Dover.

Among his manuscripts was found the commencement of a violent satire against

three of his most intimate friends, Lloyd, Thornton, and Colman. Wilkes, who had the inspection of his papers (and who told this circumstance to a literary friend of mine), very properly burnt them. This fragment consisted of about a hundred lines.

His few books, furniture, &c. sold most extravagantly dear. Party, and the popularity of his name as a writer, had stamped a kind of visionary value upon them; which my readers will best judge of, when they are informed that a common steel pen sold for *five pounds*, and a pair of plated spurs for *sixteen guineas* *!

Having finished these incidental remarks on the fates of literary characters, let us now

* The following advice which Madame Terein, a woman of great literary discernment, gave to Marmontel, when a young man, with respect to *authorship*, should be a perpetual lesson to all writers by profession. "Secure yourself," said she, "a livelihood independent of literary successes; and put into *this lottery* only the overplus of your time: for woe to him who depends wholly on his pen! Nothing is more casual. The man who makes shoes, is sure of his wages; but the man who writes a book, or a tragedy, is never sure of any thing."

Life of Marmontel.

return to join in the laugh with Foote and his merry associates.

CXVI. *Literary Confidence.*

Foote rattling away, in his usual manner, at Mr. Fitzherbert's table,—a gentleman who either had a mind to set up for a second-hand wit, or wanted to cheapen the talent, requested "that he would give him his last good thing."—"Why, so I would," said the other, "if I could trust you."—"What! do you doubt my integrity?"—"Not at all, my dear Sir; but I do your *steadiness:* for, believe me, there are very few people that *can carry a bon-mot safely.*"

CXVII. *The late Duke of Cumberland.*

Foote made a somewhat similar reply to the late duke of Cumberland; who told him, by way of compliment, "that he himself swallowed all his good things."—"Do you so?" said the wit: "then let me compliment your Royal Highness, in turn, on the excellency of your *digestion;* as I never knew you *throw up one of them.*"

CXVIII. *Travelling in Scotland.*

Foote was four days in the interior parts of Scotland without being able to get any meat. He was, however, told, that if he would push on for a day's journey further, he would be sure of one of the best inns in Scotland; but when he arrived there, the landlord, like *Boniface,* in the *Beaux Stratagem,* "had every thing he called for, *the week before.*" At last he said he could get him a boiled fowl.—"Excellent!" said Foote; "this, with a little celery sauce, will do nicely." A long period elapsed without this fowl making its appearance; when, Foote's patience being almost exhausted, he opened a window which looked into the yard, and there saw a woman knocking down an old game-cock with a pot-ladle; "which cock," said he, telling the story, "*gauntlets* and all, I was obliged to eat for my supper."—"And could you eat it?" asked one of his hearers.—"Why, what else could I do, on the *spur* of such an occasion?"

CXIX. *Modern Commiseration.*

Hearing that a friend of his, of no great legal abilities, nor any settled fortune, had been promoted to the office of attorney-general in one of the West-India islands, he exclaimed: "Alas, poor Jack! Hitherto he had the art of concealing his *wants;* but now he'll be completely exposed, as *necessity* has no *law.*"

CXX. *The Black Bob.*

Expecting a gentleman to dine with him at North-end, who was remarkable for wearing a black scratch-wig, and who did not come in time, Foote was every now and then on the look-out for him. At last perceiving him riding up the avenue, "Aye, here he comes at last," said he.—"But are you sure it is he?" asked one of the company, impatient for dinner.—"Why, at this distance I would not take my oath of it; but it is either he or Charles the Second, for there is the *black wig* evidently bobbing up and down *among the oaks.*"

CXXI. *Fair Helen.*

The same gentleman having introduced to him his wife (who was very plain), and seeing Foote rather struck with her homely appearance, observed, "that though *his* Helen could not boast much beauty, she was a very excellent domestic woman for all that."—"I have no doubt of it, my good friend," said Foote; "I was only thinking what a thousand pities it is that the Grecian Helen was *not more like her*; for if she was, Troy most certainly would never have been burnt."

CXXII. *Archibald Hamilton.*

Somebody praising Mr. Hamilton as a well-read man, Foote said he did not see much of that about him. "I grant you, he *reads* a great many *proofs*; but these are no *proofs* of *his reading**."

CXXIII. *Cure for Pomposity of Speech.*

A country squire just come to town, was

* There was however more quibble than truth in this assertion, as Mr. Hamilton was a very judicious and well-informed man.

bragging of the great number of fashionable people he had visited that morning; "and among the rest," said he, in a pompous deliberate manner, "I called upon my good friend the earl of *Chol—mon—dely*, but he was not at home."—"That is rather surprising," said Foote: "what! nor none of his *pe—o—ple?*"

CXXIV. *Crabbe Boulton.*

Being on a visit at Crabbe Boulton's (chairman of the East India company) during a frosty season, where they kept very bad fires, Foote found himself so uncomfortable, that he prepared next morning for setting off to town. "Eh!" said his host, seeing the chaise at the door, "why think of going so soon?"—"Because, if I stay any longer, perhaps I should *not have a leg to stand upon.*"—"Why, we don't drink so hard."—"No; but it freezes so hard, and your servants know the value of a *good bit of timber* so well, that I'm in hourly dread of losing my wooden leg."

CXXV. *The Danger of leaving off a Wig.*

Meeting a well-known bookseller in the

street, who for his various publications had been often prosecuted by the crown, he perceived some alteration in his dress, which he could not account for. "Oh!" said the other, "it is because I have thrown off my wig, and wear my own hair."—"And how could you be such a fool?" said Foote.—"Why, do you think I'm ashamed *to show my ears?*"—"No; but you should have been provident enough to *keep your wig, to conceal the loss of them.*"

CXXVI. *Dr. Johnson.*

Dr. Johnson being asked by a lady, what love was? replied, "it was the wisdom of a fool, and the folly of the wise." Dryden, being once asked the same question, said, "It was a thing he had often seen, felt, and heard of, but never could understand."

CXXVII. *The same.*

Foote laughing at Dr. Johnson's absurdities before an intimate friend of the doctor, the latter told him, "Johnson was even *with him, for* he said as severe things of

him."—"What could he say of me?" cried Foote.—"Why, talking of your religion one day, somebody said you were an infidel, when Johnson replied; 'No, Sir; not otherwise than as a dog is an infidel, who does not know whether he believes or not.'" Foote reddened at this excessively, and very seriously entered into the proofs of his moral and religious education.

CXXVIII. *Family Vanity.*

Foote was taken off his guard at another time in a singular manner. Soon after the publication of his comedy of *The Author*, his friends were laughing at the absurdity of persons piquing themselves on the antiquity of their family; when one who knew Foote's failing on this account, observed, "that however people might laugh at family, he believed there never was a man well descended, who was not proud of it." Foote, catching the bait, instantly replied, "No doubt, no doubt: for instance now, though I trust I may be considered far from a vain man, yet, being descended from as ancient a family as

any in Cornwall, I am not a little proud of it; as indeed you shall see I may be."

Here the servant was ordered to bring down the family pedigree; which he began elucidating with all the vanity and folly he so successfully ridiculed in his own *Cadwallader.*

CXXIX. *Dr. Johnson and Foote.*

Johnson and Foote, though both men of wit and strong sense, showed these qualities in different ways. The first was grave and sarcastical; the other was the meteor of the moment, who possessed every species of wit and humour, and could command them at will. Johnson never condescended to be the buffoon, and was not always ready at retort*. Foote never failed; and rather than be *out of laugh,* could put on the motley coat with

* This defect Johnson once confessed to Mr. Boswell, upon the latter asking him why he was so severe upon him without cause. "No, Sir," said Johnson, "you made me angry before, about the American war."—"And why did you not take your revenge directly?"—"Because, Sir, I *had nothing ready:* a man cannot strike his antagonist till he has his weapons."

pleasure, and strut in it with as much pride as in his most refined sallies of conversation. This contrariety of talents and inclinations kept those two geniuses from a personal acquaintance for a long time, though they perfectly understood each other's character, and associated occasionally with the common friends of both.

Accident, however, drew them together at the table of Mr. Fitzherbert (the father of the present Lord St. Helen's); and Johnson has told the particulars of this interview himself, as follows:—

"The first time I ever was in company with Foote, was at Mr. Fitzherbert's. Having no good opinion of the fellow, I was resolved not to be pleased; and it is very difficult to please a man against his will. I went on eating my dinner pretty sullenly, affecting for a long time not to mind him; but the dog was so very comical, that I was obliged to lay down my knife and fork, throw myself back on my chair, and fairly laugh it out with the rest. No, Sir; there

was no avoiding it: the fellow was irresistible."

CXXX. *Foote turned Brewer.*

A still more natural proof of the superior powers of his conversation happened on another day at the same table. Foote, among the revolutions of his various fortune, contracted himself as a *partial* partner in a small-beer brewery; that is, he was to have a certain profit of the trade, in the proportion of the small beer which he sold upon his own account: and as his friends and acquaintances were numerous and respectable, the *firm* augured favourably to both parties.

However, whether the leading partner considered Foote's particular recommendation as a passport for any kind of beer, or whether he was in the general habit of using the pump too liberally, the small beer served at Mr. Fitzherbert's table was such, that the servants could not drink it; but as the *gentleman brewer* was so very intimate with the master, they, to avoid complaining themselves, commissioned Sancho, a black boy

who was a great favourite about the house, to lay their general resolution before him, "that they could no longer drink the small beer."

On the day appointed for this *eclaircissement*, Foote happened to dine at Mr. Fitzherbert's; but Sancho, who waited at table, instead of being an informer against him, was so delighted with his stories and flashes of merriment, that he told his fellow-servants, on going down into the kitchen, "that he would drink the small beer on, if it was ten times worse, rather than do the least injury to so comical a gentleman."

CXXXI. *Dr. Johnson's Character of Foote.*

With all Dr. Johnson's prejudices against Foote, he gave him the decided preference in *humorous narrative*. "His happiness of manner in relation is such," said he, "as subdues arrogance, and rouses stupidity."

CXXXII. *The same.*

Of his dramatic character the doctor gave the following opinion:—"He is not a good

mimic; but he has wit, a fertility and variety of images, and is not deficient in reading. He has knowledge enough to fill up his part: then he has great range for his wit; he never lets truth stand between him and a jest, and he is sometimes mighty coarse."

Being asked whether Foote had a singular talent of exhibiting character, he replied, "No, Sir: it is not a talent, it is a vice. It is what others abstain from. It is not comedy, which exhibits the character of a species, as that of a miser gathered from many misers; it is farce, which exhibits an individual."

CXXXIII. *The same.*

At another time, speaking of his dramatic character, he observed: "I don't think Foote a good mimic. His imitations are not like. He gives you something different from himself, without *going into other people*. He cannot take off any person, except he is strongly marked, such as George Faulkner. He is like a painter who can draw the

portrait of a man who has a wen upon his face, and who therefore is easily known. If a man hops upon one leg, Foote can hop upon one leg; *but he has not a nice discrimination of character.* He is, however, upon the whole very entertaining; with a particular species of conversation between wit and buffoonery."

Concluding on this subject, he would say, "I am afraid Foote has no principle. He is at times neither governed by good manners nor discretion, and very little by affection. But for a broad laugh," (and here the doctor would himself smile in recollection of it,) "I must confess, the scoundrel has no fellow."

CXXXIV. *The same.*

When Johnson heard of the report of Foote's being horse-whipped in Dublin for taking off George Faulkner, the printer, Garrick observed, "that he was much surprised at it, as he thought Foote was so well known that *nobody minded him.*"—"Yes, Sir," said Johnson; "but now you find the fel-

though, I must confess, the want of Mrs. Garrick's company must make every place a desert." Garrick generally forced a laugh upon these occasions, but was always glad to conclude a truce at the expense of a dinner.

CXXXVIII. *The same.*

At another time he said Garrick loved money so well, that should he ever retire from his profession, he would commence banker's clerk, for the mere pleasure of counting over the cash: and as for the stage, he was so fond of it, that rather than not play at all, he would act before the kitchen-fire at the Shakspeare for a sop in the pan.

CXXXIX. *The same.*

Foote and Garrick supping together at the Bedford, the former, in pulling out his purse to pay the reckoning, dropt a guinea, which rolled in such a direction that they could not readily find it. "Where the deuce," says Foote, "can it be gone to?"——

"*Gone to the devil,* I suppose," said Garrick.—"Well said, David: you are always what I took you for; ever contriving to make *a guinea go farther* than any other man."

CXL. *The same.*

Foote showing a house which he had newly fitted up, to some friends, in passing through his bed-chamber one of the company observed a small Roman bust of Garrick on the bureau, at which he smiled: "I don't wonder," said Foote, "you should laugh at me for allowing him to be so near my gold; but then please to observe *he has no hands.*"

CXLI. *The same.*

Previously to Foote's bringing out his *primitive puppet-show* in the Haymarket Theatre, he enjoined all his performers, carpenters, scene-shifters, &c. to keep it a profound secret; only to insinuate that something was in preparation that would much surprise the town from its novelty. Garrick, among others,

heard of this; and as he was always "tremblingly alive" to every thing that might operate against his fame and profit, he took several circuitous ways to find out the nature of the design, but in vain. Foote kept him on the tortures of expectation for some time; till, being very nearly ready for exhibition, he determined to have the laugh against him once for all. He accordingly told him, "if he would dine with him on such a day, he should be let into the secret."

Garrick readily obeyed the summons, and a convivial party was likewise summoned by Foote to share in the merriment of the plot. After dinner Foote said very gravely, "that the secret he had hitherto kept so very profound was, a performer he had to introduce of such rare and singular talents, that except *himself*," bowing to Garrick, "he did not believe there was a man of near such merit on any theatre in Europe."—"Eh! eh!" said Garrick, much confused, "where does he come from? what is his name?"—"*Birch*," said the other; "a very near relation of your old friend Dr. Birch. He's

now in the next room: will you have a specimen of his abilities?"—"Why, hey, now, if I did not think it would dash the young man's spirits, I, I should like it above all things."—"Oh! if that be all:—here, John, introduce the young gentleman, I'll be answerable for his spirits; as you'll find him to be bred in the true school of Socrates, and that he has learned to consider his audience as so many cabbage-stalks."

At this moment, John, who previously had his *cue*, introduced a large figure of Punch in his arms.—"Eh!" said Garrick, "what now, I understand: oh! a puppet-show! Well, but what is your hero to do? is he to be only a mere comical fellow, or a mimic, or what?"—"Why, what the deuce, David, surely you are not already jealous of poor Punch? Come, John, part the *rivals*, or we shall soon have some noble blood spilt on the occasion."

Here the laugh was unanimously against Garrick; who was, however, very glad to be eased of his fears at the expense of a little ridicule.

CXLII. *Garrick. (An original Anecdote.)*

When Garrick first undertook to play *Bayes* in *The Rehearsal,* he had some doubts of the propriety of taking-off his brother performers; and therefore made a proposal to Giffard, the manager of the theatre in Goodman's-fields, to permit him to begin with him as a kind of an apology for the rest. Giffard, supposing that Garrick would only just glance at him to countenance the mimicry of the others, consented: but Garrick hit him off so truly, and made him so completely ridiculous, at rehearsal, that Giffard, in a rage, sent him a challenge; which Garrick accepting, they met the next morning, when the latter was wounded in the sword arm.

The comedy of *The Rehearsal* had been during this time advertised for the Saturday night ensuing; but the duel intervening (which none but the parties and their seconds knew of at that time, and very few ever since), the play was put off for a fortnight longer, *on account of the sudden in-*

disposition of a principal performer. At the end of that time it came out, with imitations of most of the principal actors; but Giffard was totally omitted.

CXLIII. *Garrick.*

Foote, returning one night from the House of Commons to the Bedford after hearing the late Lord Chatham, then Mr. Pitt, deliver one of his fulminating speeches against the ministry, met Garrick there; and upon his asking him where he had been, said "he had just come from hearing a man give such specimens of dramatic abilities, as in his opinion were much superior to any thing on the stage." Observing the very forcible manner in which Foote said this, Garrick began to be alarmed; and hesitatingly said, "Why, hey! now then, I suppose we shall soon have him for or against old Drury."—"I don't exactly know that, but this you may depend upon; should that day ever arrive, King David will be but a *viceroy at best!*" At this Garrick coloured, and showed for some time great uneasiness;

when Foote at last quieted him by asking what he thought of the talents of Mr. Pitt.—"Think of him!" says Garrick, in a mixture of agreeable surprise, and of veneration for so exalted a character; "why, that if he had originally preferred Drury-lane to St. Stephen's, he would have almost annihilated the stage, by throwing us all at such an immeasurable distance!"

CXLIV. *Comparison between Foote and Garrick.*

[By Dr. Johnson.]

"Garrick has greatly the preference for elegance of conversation; but Foote has greater powers of entertainment. Garrick is restrained by principle, but Foote has the advantage of an unlimited range. Garrick has some delicacy of feeling:—it is possible to put him out;—you may get the better of him: but Foote is the most *incompressible* fellow I ever knew; when you have driven him into a corner, and think you are sure of him, he runs through between your legs, jumps over your head, and so makes his escape."

CXLV. *Character of Garrick.*

[By the same.]

"Garrick was on the whole a good man, a decent liver in a profession which is supposed to give indulgences to licentiousness, and a man who freely gave away money *acquired by himself.* He began the world with great hunger for money; the son of a half-pay officer, whose study was to make *fourpence* go for *fourpence halfpenny:* but when he got money, and became independent, he was liberal."

CXLVI. *Comparison between Burke and Foote.*

[By the same.]

"Burke has that constant stream of conversation, that if a man was by chance to go with him under a shed, or into a stable, to shun a shower, he would say, 'This is an extraordinary man.' Foote was a man who never failed in conversation; but if he had gone into a stable, the ostler would have said, 'Here has been a mighty comical fellow;' but he would not have respected him."

Question by one of the company. "Why then, Sir, the ostler perhaps would have given him *as good as he brought*, as the common saying is."—"Yes, Sir; and Foote would have been able to answer the ostler exactly in his own way.—When Burke does not descend to be merry, his conversation is very superior indeed. There is no proportion between the powers which he shows in *serious talk* and in *jocularity:* when he lets himself down to that, he is in the kennel."

CXLVII. *Of Burke's Wit.*

[By the same.]

"I do not think Burke has wit. He is indeed continually attempting it, but he fails; and I have no more pleasure in hearing a man attempting wit and failing, than in seeing a man trying to leap over a ditch, and tumbling into it."

CXLVIII. *On Burke's Oratory.*

[By Wilkes.]

"Amidst all the brilliancy of Burke's

imagination, and the exuberance of his wit, there is occasionally a strange want of taste. It was observed of the Venus of Apelles, that her flesh seemed as if it had been nourished by roses; but Burke's oratory would sometimes make us suspect that he eats potatoes and drinks whiskey."

CXLIX. *An Apology for Burke's Redundancy of Imagination.*

While this subject was afloat at Foote's table one day, Topham Beauclerc (who, though a very ingenious man, was no way remarkable for being an *apologist*) observed that "the best excuse for Burke's redundancy of imagination was what the Marquis of Halifax said of Bishop Burnet: 'our nature hardly allows us to have enough of any thing, without our having too much.' He cannot, at all times, so hold in his thoughts, but that sometimes they run away with him; *as it is hard for a vessel that is brimful, when in motion, not to run over:* and therefore the variety of matter that he ever carries about him, may throw

out more than an unkind critic would allow."

CL. *Burke.*

Though Dr. Johnson admitted that Burke "possessed a great variety of knowledge, a store of imagery, and a power of diversifying his matter by placing it in various relations," he would not allow him either *wit* or *humour;* and when Dr. Robertson asked him whether Burke did not possess a degree of wit with his other great talents, he replied: "No, Sir; he never succeeds there: 'tis low; 'tis conceit. I used to say, Burke never made a good joke; and what I most envy him is, his being constantly the same."

With great deference to the above authority, several of Burke's speeches, and many parts of his conversation, refuted this dogmatical assertion. It is true, he had not the exuberance of Foote, George Selwyn, the late Earl of Chesterfield, and some others; yet he was far from being deficient in point and jocularity when he thought

proper, as the following out of many other instances may prove:

When Gerard Hamilton (commonly known by the name of *Single-speech* Hamilton), who first patronized Mr. Burke by procuring him a pension on the Irish establishment, had quarrelled with him, Hamilton in a moment of ill temper said, "he was an ungrateful man; as 'twas *he* that first took him from a garret, and introduced him into life."—"Oh! then it appears by his own confession," said Burke, "that *I* first *descended* to know him."

On Wilkes being carried on the shoulders of the mob, he exclaimed, in the character which Horace has given of Pindar as a poet:

> ——— "*Numerisque fertur*
> *Lege solutus.*"

Horace too, he said, had in one line given the best description of a good desirable *manor:*

"Est *modus* in rebus; sunt certi denique *fines.*"

When Boswell told him that he had a mind to visit the Isle of Man, in order to write an account of it, Burke approved of his resolution, and said he would give him a motto for his work:

"The proper study of mankind, is *Man.*"

Dining at an eminent personage's table where the bottle circulated very fast, he was asked next morning how he liked his host. "Oh!" said he, "so well, that all *whig* as I am, I will allow him to be a prince *jure de-vino.*"

CLI. *The Danger of Female Beauty.*

A white horse and a beautiful woman, Foote said, were two troublesome things to manage: as the first was difficult to be kept *clean;* and the second, *honest.*

CLII. *Mrs. Cibber.*

Mrs. Cibber having some little fracas with Garrick *about increase of salary,* in which, after some struggles, she succeeded, was soon afterwards singing with great ap-

plause the following line in a favourite song of that day:

"The roses will bloom when there's peace in the breast."

"Very true," said Foote; singing out to the same tune, by the side scene:

"So the turtles will coo, *when they've peas in their craws.*"

CLIII. *James Forfeit.*

An artist of the name of *Forfeit* having some job to do for Foote, and keeping it long after the time when he promised to bring it home, was making his apology by saying "he had got into a foolish scrape about the *antiquity of family* with another artist, who gave him such a drubbing as confined him to his bed for a considerable time. "Forfeit! Forfeit!" said the wit, catching the idea; "why, surely you should have the best of that argument; as I can prove your family to be not only several *thousand years old*, but at the same time

the *most numerous* of any on the face of the globe."—"Aye!" said the man, quite transported with joy; "pray on what authority?"—"On the authority of Shakspeare:

"All the souls that are, *were forfeit once.*"

CLIV. *Addison (the Butcher).*

Old Usher, one of the veterans of the Haymarket Theatre, praising very much a loin of veal that was on Foote's table, asked him who was his butcher. "I think his name's Addison," said Foote.—"Addison!" cried Usher; "I wonder, is he any relation to the great Addison?"—"Why, that I don't exactly know; and yet I think he must, as he is seldom without his *steel" (Steele)* "by his side."

CLV. *The Danger of an old Man's marrying.*

Talking of the folly of an old man marrying a young woman, a lady observed, "that perhaps he was *in love;* and then he

was rather to be pitied than reproved."—"Very true, Madam," said Foote: "for love is like the small pox; the later in life we catch it, the worse the disorder generally turns out."

CLVI. *Serjeant S—re.*

This gentleman was said to have been originally bred an apothecary and *accoucheur*. In the course of human events, however, and by the aid of studious and persevering talents, he became a learned serjeant at law; though in this situation he was always considered more of a *prosing* than an eloquent speaker. When the late Mr. Murphy was a young barrister on the home circuit, he had the curiosity to take down a speech of the serjeant's, which consisted of little else than constant repetitions of "*Gemmen* of the Jury," &c. This speech he afterwards showed to the Lord Chief Baron Skinner; who, instead of laughing at it with the rest of the company, very gravely remarked, "that he thought the serjeant very ill treated; for though it

was true he often *delivered other people*, it was never understood he *could deliver himself*."

CLVII. *Garrick.*

Garrick repeating the following passage to his supposed mistress in a new play:—

——— "Alas!
I fear I seem *too little* in your eyes,"

a man in the upper gallery cried out, "Why, to be sure you do; it would be very odd if you did not." On this the house was in a roar; when Garrick took the hint, and never repeated the line afterwards.

CLVIII. *Kitty Clive.*

She possessed a strong masculine understanding, with a very lively conversation to the last. After her retirement from the stage, she was prevailed upon to see Tom King in the character of *Belcour* in *The West Indian*. She had a long and early friendship for this very deserving actor, and allowed him all his merit in most of the

characters for which he was distinguished, but could never subscribe to his *easy well-bred gentleman*. Upon coming home, she was asked how she liked him. "Oh! just as I thought," said she; "ever gay, brisk, and lively; but still those *curling irons* were, as usual, constantly peeping out of his pocket."

CLIX. *The same.*

She was always averse to cultivating much acquaintance with what is called the great world, though at times strongly solicited. One day a female friend was pressing her on this subject, and asking her why she did not visit the Countess of ——, Lord and Lady ——, &c. some of whom were not the most *immaculate* characters in private life.—"Why, because my dear," said she, "I choose my company as I do my fruit, therefore I am not for *damaged quality*."

CLX. *The same.*

When first she saw Mrs. Siddons in *Isabella*, she was asked, "Well, Kitty, what

do you think of your *Pritchards* and *Cibbers* now?"—"Oh!" said she, "'tis all truth and day-light."

CLXI. *The same.*

Her *Portia* in *The Merchant of Venice* was always one of her favourite characters; though it was far from being one of her best, and became still worse as she grew corpulent. Garrick saw this, and hinted to her to give it up. "I will," said she, "when you give up *Ranger;* for I'm sure I am as good a figure for *Portia* as you are for the other." Seeing this would not do, Garrick acknowledged her remark in a very neat epigram, the concluding verse of which runs thus:—

"Dear Kate, it is vanity both us bewitches,
Since I must the truth on't reveal;
For when I mount the ladder, and you wear the breeches,
We show what we ought to conceal."

But neither of them took advice from this epigram: Kitty was the *Portia* of Drury-lane, and Garrick the *Ranger,* to the period of their respective retirements.

CLXII. *The same.*

Having a good opinion of the abilities of a young gentleman who was strongly recommended to her, she introduced him to Garrick; who, at her request, put him in the part of *Richard* for his first appearance. Getting no applause, however, during the performance of this character, Garrick rather tauntingly said: "Well, Kitty; you see what kind of reception your stage-struck hero receives from the audience."—"There may be a reason for that," said she.—"Why, what reason?"—"*They are not used of late to be spoken to but by the recorder* *."

CLXIII. *Serjeant Whitaker.*

This gentleman, who was a wit and a humourist in his day, as well as a very respectable lawyer, and who often joined the social band of our modern Aristophanes, was

* The excuse that *Buckingham* makes in *Richard III.* for the City Common-hall, on their not listening to his speech in favour of the *Duke of Gloucester.*

travelling down to Oxford in company with Mr. Murphy, when their chaise was stopped in the lane of a country village, by a waggon delivering fat and offal to a tallow-chandler. While they fretted at this delay, a horseman came up to the side of the chaise, who appeared to be a country-rider, and one of the *thinnest* men possible; and began teasing them with an account of the number of miles he had rode that day, and the still greater number he had to go before night. Whitaker heard him with a subdued temper for some time; at last breaking out, he exclaimed, "And what mighty matter is all this, Sir? considering that you have just sent your *guts before you*, and have now nothing to carry about you but *the case*."

CLXIV. *The same.*

Being an examining counsel at the bar of the House of Lords, he put a question to a witness which the house ordered the counsel to withdraw upon; and they entered into a debate of near two hours, still resolving upon nothing. On his re-admittance he

was desired to put the same question over again. Whitaker, who felt this trifling, very gravely replied, "Upon my word, my Lords, it is so *long* since I put the first question, that I entirely forget it; but with your permission I'll put another."

CLXV. *The same.*

Lady A—r and another lady praising serjeant Walker's dancing a minuet at some country assembly (who was rather an awkward man at the graces), Whitaker was astonished at it, and for some time endeavoured to persuade them that they must mean somebody else. The ladies, however, still persisting, he very gravely begged permission to put one question to them: "Pray, ladies, was it upon his *hind* or *fore-legs* that serjeant Walker *moved so gracefully?*"

CLXVI. *The same.*

Being on the circuit, he was complimented by a friend of his, during his stay in some town, with a bed. The next morning, as

usual, the lady of the house, in doing the honours, asked him how he slept, and "hoped he found himself sufficiently comfortable and warm."—"Yes, yes, Madam; pretty well, upon the whole. At first, to be sure, I felt a little queer for the want of Mrs. Whitaker; but recollecting that my portmanteau lay in the room, I threw it behind my back, and it did every bit as well."

CLXVII. *Edward Foote.*

Foote had a brother (as mentioned in the early part of these Memoirs,) named Edward, a *hum-drum* kind of quiet man; who being mostly unbeneficed in his profession, Foote allowed him sixty pounds a year, and, as he himself called it, "the run of his house and theatre." This man, having nothing to do, was constantly gossiping in the green-room; where being observed by the late Duke of Cumberland, his Highness inquired who he was.—"What, that little man in the shabby black coat just gone out?" said Foote: "oh! that's *my barber.*"

This passed off for the time: till by accident the Duke found out that instead of his barber he was his brother; and challenged him about it the first time he saw him. "Why, what could I do with the fellow?" said Foote: "I could not say he was a *brother-wit;* and as I could not disclaim *all* relationship with him, I was obliged to make him out a *brother-shaver.*"

CLXVIII. *The same.*

At other times Ned (as our hero familiarly called him) would fall asleep in the green-room; and as he had a remarkable *large tongue,* it frequently lolled out of his mouth, to the no small entertainment of the performers. One morning at rehearsal, however, this circumstance offered such a temptation to one of the players, that he gave him a *chuck* under the chin, which cut his mouth, and sent him crying to his brother.—"And why do you abuse the performers so much as you do?" asked the latter.—"What, I abuse them?" said the poor parson: "I never said a disrespectful word of

them in my life."—"Poh! poh!" said the other; "that must be a fib by your own confession; as 'tis plain you have not been *able to keep a good tongue in your head.*"

CLXIX. *Arbitration.*

An attorney of a very bad character having a dispute with a bailiff, the latter brought an action against him, which Foote recommended to be compromised. The parties at length agreed; but requested that in case of a difference in arbitration, they would permit them to call upon him to decide.—"Oh! no," said Foote; "I may be partial to one or other of you: but I'll do better;—I'll recommend a *thief*, as the *common friend of both.*"

CLXX. *Foote and Macklin.*

When Macklin gave lectures on oratory (at what he called *Black's* coffee-house, in contradistinction to *White's*), Foote, who was then a young dashing man of the town, attended them constantly, and was as much the object of attention to the company as

the orator. One night, when Macklin was formally preparing to begin, hearing Foote rattling away at the lower end of the room, and thinking to silence him at once, he called out in his sarcastic manner: "Pray, young gentleman, do you know what I am going to say?"—"No, Sir," said Foote, quickly; "*do you?*"

CLXXL. *The same.*

Foote, who was ever in the extremes of fortune, now at the top and now at the bottom of her wheel, happened some time after this to be in the *latter condition*, when Macklin had an opportunity of retorting on him. They were both at the Bedford coffee-house together; when Foote, perhaps to keep up the appearance of prosperity, was every now and then showing off a fine gold repeating watch, which he kept either dangling in his hand or up to his ear. At last he suddenly exclaimed, "Zounds! my watch is *stopt!*"—"Poh! poh!" said Macklin, "never mind that, Sam; you may depend *upon it, it will soon go.*"

CLXXII. *Murphy, Foote, and Garrick.*

Murphy was the first author who brought out Mrs. Yates's abilities; by introducing her in the character of *Mandane,* in his *Orphan of China.* Mrs. Cibber was originally *cast* for this part; but thinking there might be a contrivance between her and Garrick, that she should be sick on the occasion, he engaged Mrs. Yates, then an actress of not above three pounds a week, to under-study the part. His suspicions were soon after justified: Mrs. Cibber was announced to be suddenly taken ill, and Garrick said "the play must go over to the next season."—"No," said Murphy; "I am prepared:" and immediately produced Mrs. Yates; who played the part admirably, very much to Garrick's surprise, and equally to the anticipation of her subsequent renown.

During the above business, Foote and Murphy being at dinner at the Bedford, a note came from Mrs. Cibber, pleading sudden illness, apologizing for the unluckiness of the circumstance, and concluding with

"praying most earnestly for the success of the piece." When Murphy read this note, he handed it over to Foote; who, after perusing it, very deliberately asked him what religion Mrs. Cibber was of?"—"A *Roman Catholic*, I believe," said Murphy.—"I thought so," said the other, "*by her praying so earnestly for the dead.*"

CLXXIII. *The same.*

When Murphy had finished his *Upholsterer*, the first dramatic piece he ever wrote, he sent it to Garrick for representation; who, after some time, returned it, as "rather premature for the stage." The author complained of this to Mr. Fox (afterwards Lord Holland, and who was then high in office), who had previously read it, and liked it much.—"Well," said that gentleman, "Garrick dines here on Sunday next with some others; and if you'll call on me on Monday morning, I may be able to tell you some particulars that may clear away his objections."

Murphy accordingly called at the time

appointed; when Mr. Fox told him, "that soon after dinner he contrived it with one of his friends to quote, every now and then, some passages in *The Upholsterer*. 'Hey dey!' said Garrick; 'here you have been poaching, I find, in some of the grounds that I know a little of.'—'Yes,' said Mr. Fox, 'and what the town will soon know a great deal of, if I am not much mistaken, and to the author's advantage.—Come, here's his health, and success to his piece.' At this," continued Mr. Fox, "our conversation ended; but I dare say you'll soon hear from him again."

The same evening Murphy received a very polite note from Garrick, "requesting to have the farce back again: as he had overlooked the scenes in the pressure of varied business, he now believed they had a great deal more merit than he had been then aware of; and the only apology he could make was, to get the farce up directly, and give it all the strength of his company."

This proposal was joyfully accepted. The

farce was soon after brought out in great force; *Razor* by Woodward, who made a *chef-d'œuvre* of it; and *Pamphlet* by Garrick, who played it in his usual style of excellence.

CLXXIV. *The same.*

Murphy at first wished to dedicate his *Orphan of China* to Mr. Fox. "No," said that gentleman; "you'll only make yourself enemies, and do me no good. Dedicate it to the Prince of Wales" (his present Majesty), "and I'll put you in the way of it." The next time Mr. Fox saw Murphy, he bid him attend Lord Bute the Sunday following at Kensington: "you will then be told 'a single play cannot so well be dedicated to the Prince;' and in that case seize the opportunity, and beg leave to dedicate it to his Lordship."

The poet did as he was directed. Lord Bute, after acknowledging the favour, accepted the dedication; and made him a present, from the Prince of Wales, of a bank-note of a hundred pounds.

Murphy telling the above anecdote some time afterwards at Holland-house, Lord Hillsborough asked him whether, in the course of the conversation he had with Lord Bute, his Lordship once asked him to sit down? "No," said Murphy; "now I recollect, he walked me up and down a long gallery during the whole time."—"I thought so," said Lord Hillsborough; "now this is among the number of his Scotch vanities."

CLXXV. *Dr. Paul Hiffernan.*

This was one of the mendicant authors who attended Foote's levee. He was by no means deficient in either classical learning or modern languages; but living so long out of England, he wanted a facility of style, as well as a good taste for English subjects. This kept him more at a distance with the booksellers than he wished: Foote, however, occasionally relieved and laughed at him.

One day Paul was relating some circumstance as a *fact*; and by way of corroboration said, he would pawn his soul upon it.

—"Aye, that you may," said Foote; "and your *watch* too, Doctor, which at *present is of more value to you*; and yet I must question the veracity of what you tell me."

CLXXVI. *The same.*

Another time, returning from North-end to town when it rained very hard, Foote *lent* him half-a-crown to pay his coach hire. "I believe, Sir," said one of the servants, "the fare to town is three shillings."—"Yes, I know that very well," said Foote; "but the little walk the Doctor will have to his lodgings in this fine refreshing shower, will give his old black coat a drink that will be infinitely better for him than the odd sixpence."

CLXXVII. *The same.*

Paul was fond of laying, or rather *offering*, wagers. One day, in the heat of argument, he cried out, "I'll lay *my head* you are wrong upon that point."—"Well," said Foote, "I accept the wager; *any trifle* among friends has a value."

CLXXVIII. *The same.*

Foote would occasionally sear up these sarcasms with acts of kindness and generosity. One day meeting Paul waddling up the Haymarket with rather a woeful countenance, he asked what was the matter with him. "I don't know," said the other; "one way or other, I feel myself but so-so this morning."—"What, I suppose the old disorder, *impecuniosity*?" At this the Doctor shook his head. "Well then, let me prescribe for you; I have had a *bumper* last night at my theatre, and therefore can afford to *lend* you as many guineas as you have shillings in your pocket."

The Doctor, very fortunately for him, had just changed his last half-guinea; and had *seven shillings* remaining, which he instantly produced with great satisfaction.—"Aye, here we have come to the root of the disorder," said Foote, smiling: "there are seven guineas for you; and now, Doctor, I hope you'll be a *healthy* man for at least *seven* weeks longer."

CLXXIX. *The same.*

Hiffernan wrote a farce, which was damned. The elder Colman, however, seeing something in it worth using in a piece of his, proposed giving him ten guineas for it, which the other joyfully accepted; but Colman pausing about what form of a receipt should be given for it, the Doctor suddenly took up the pen and wrote, "Received of Geo. Colman, Esq. ten guineas, for *an incident*; and for which I am much obliged to him."

CLXXX. ON ELOQUENCE, RECITATION, AND NARRATIVE.

(Conversation pieces.)

Lords Bolingbroke and Mansfield.

These noble lords, who were partly cotemporaries, were not less distinguished for their eloquence than for their rank, learning, and general accomplishments. Lord Chesterfield, a decided critic upon this subject,

speaks thus of the powers of the former of them:—

"Lord Bolingbroke has both a tongue and a pen to persuade. His manner of speaking in private conversation is full as elegant as his writing. Whatever subject he either speaks or writes upon, he adorns it with the most splendid eloquence:—not a studied, laboured eloquence; but such a flowing happiness of diction, as, from care perhaps at first, is become so habitual to him, that even his most familiar conversations, if taken down in writing, would bear the press without the least correction, either as to the method or style. If his conduct in the former part of his life had been equal to all his natural and acquired talents, he would have most justly merited the epithet of all-accomplished."

Lord Mansfield almost stood alone, through a long course of professional business, for a copiousness and richness of eloquence, not only in his speeches in parliament, and at the bar of the House of Lords,

but on seemingly the most barren questions in the courts. Many instances of this have been given by the old solicitors; who have said, that often when the audience part of the Court of King's Bench would begin to thin from the expectation of no material business coming on, no sooner was the cry given of "Murray being up," than the crowds would run back so as not only to fill the court, but all the avenues leading to it.

He read too with a great discrimination and sweetness of tone:

"*Nullum quod tetegit, non ornavit:*"

Insomuch that in reading even the law and parliamentary records, he rendered them so interesting, and so peculiarly illustrative of his argument, that they served as fine reliefs to the more luminous parts of his oration. In short, this great man was every way entitled to the following compliment paid to him by his friend Pope, who early saw the force, the dignity, and the extent, of his general powers:—

Blest as thou art with all the power of words,
So known, so honour'd, in the House of Lords,
Conspicuous scene! another yet is nigh,
More awful far, where kings and poets lie;
Where Murray, long enough his country's pride,
Shall be no more than Tully, or than Hyde.

Betterton.

Besides the testimonies of Addison, Steele, Cibber, and others, in favour of the professional abilities of this great actor, which consisted in an infinite variety of tones, and a power of eye and gesture that were irresistible; Booth tells us, that "the first time he himself played the *Ghost* to his *Hamlet*, he was so petrified by his awful impressive manner of addressing him, that it was some minutes before he could speak."

Nat. Lee

Was so pathetic a reader of dramatic

poetry, that while he was reciting one of his own plays in the green-room to Major Mohun, the latter, in the warmth of his admiration, threw away the part, and exclaimed: "To what purpose can I undertake this character, if I am not able to play it as well as you read it?"

Dryden.

This great poet, though one of the first harmonizers of our language, was so indifferent a reader, that when he brought his play of *Amphytrion* to the stage, Cibber, who heard him give it the first reading, says, "Though he delivered the plain sense of every period, yet the whole was in so cold, so flat, and unaffecting a manner, that I am afraid of not being believed if I should express it."

Colley Cibber.

Though his voice as an actor was occasionally harsh and unmusical, more particularly in tragedy, he was a fine reciter of comedies in private. Foote and Murphy,

both excellent judges, have given testimony of this; particularly the latter, who heard him read the scenes of *Lord* and *Lady Townly* in *The Provoked Husband* to Mrs. Woffington. It is true, his voice partook of the *old school*, and therefore differed in some respect from that familiarity in modern dialogue which Garrick introduced; but it was, upon the whole, a fine picture of the manners of the age in which the play was written, and had a very impressive effect.

Pope.

Pope had a very musical voice; and recited poetry so sweetly in his youth, with a pleasing languor in his eye, that he was called by Mr. Cromwell and many of his early friends, "the young nightingale *."

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* After Lady Mary Wortley Montagu quarrelled with Pope, hearing the epithet of "the young nightingale" applied to him, she exclaimed: "Very true, indeed; all sound, and no sense!"

Rowe.

This poet equally excelled in reading well. Mrs. Oldfield, herself a fine reciter, and an acknowledged judge, declared "that all the merit she acquired in the modulation of her tones, was from Rowe reading his own tragedies."

Hooke.

This elegant writer of the Roman History, during his progress in that work, read some of the orations to Speaker Onslow, who was himself an acknowledged good orator; and he delivered them with such grace and elocution, that Onslow exclaimed, "How can I tell whether those lines are sense or nonsense, when you *bribe* me with such a harmony of voice?"

Thomson, Author of the Seasons.

He read so badly, and with such a broad Scotch accent, that he latterly never attempted it, but to divert the company.

One of the players was obliged to read his two tragedies of *Agamemnon* and *Sophonisba*.

Congreve.

Southern says of Congreve, "that when he brought a comedy of his to the players" (Dr. Johnson believes it to be *The Old Bachelor*), "he read it so wretchedly ill, that they were on the point of rejecting it, till one of them good naturedly took it out of his hands and read it; when they were so fully persuaded of its excellence, that for half a year before it was acted he had the privilege of the house."

Addison.

On the first reading of his *Cato* in the green-room, he succeeded so ill, that he would not attempt it a second time. He therefore consigned that task to Cibber; who acquitted himself so much better than the author, that the latter requested he would perform the part of *Cato*. But Cibber

knew his own talents too well for this; and he yielded the part very judiciously to Booth.

Isaac Hawkins Browne,

Who was himself a fine poet (as he proved by his Latin poem on the immortality of the soul), never could thoroughly relish Milton till he heard the elder Sheridan read some passages from that divine author.

Though Sheridan's voice was never, in my opinion, harmonious enough for the tender and pathetic parts of this divine poem; yet in the sublimer passages I have often borne witness to his dignity, force, and elocution.

Mr. Browne, beside being a good poet, was a very fine reciter, and a most delightful companion; which latter quality Dr. Johnson, in his Lives of the Poets, thus elegantly describes:—

"His conversation was at once so elegant, so apparently artless, so pure, and so pleasing, it seemed a perpetual stream of

sentiment, enlivened by gaiety, and sparkling with images."

Lord Chatham.

This illustrious statesman, so justly celebrated for his oratory, integrity, and transcendant abilities, was likewise a very fine and animated reader. Shakspeare was one of his favourite authors; whom he occasionally read to his family and private companies, with great power of voice and manner. He generally selected the heroic characters; such as *Hotspur, Henry V, Coriolanus,* &c.; assigning the comic parts to some of his relations. He had likewise an elegant turn for poetry; in which he would probably have greatly excelled, had he not been summoned away by the higher duties which he owed his country.

Bois Robert,

Who lived in the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, was celebrated for telling anecdotes with uncommon grace and vivacity; and by this talent ingratiated himself very

much with Cardinal Richelieu. His friends often solicited him to publish them; but he had the good sense to know, that though a man may *talk* himself into reputation, he may *print* himself out of it.

Shuter.

This celebrated comedian had the peculiarity of Bois Robert, that his stories would not bear printing; nor indeed would many of them bear reciting by any other person than himself. It was in his *manner* that he excelled; and that manner, aided by the luxuriance of his comic features, and the drollery of his eye, was irresistible.

Garrick.

Garrick read dramatic poetry with infinite grace, judgment, and versatility; so much so, that he could generally impose any part he pleased on a performer, though ever so bad, by his manner of repeating it in the green-room. Dick Yates often told the Editor of these Memoirs, that it required

all his skill and foresight to guard against him in this point; of which he gave the following anecdote among many others:—

In order to strengthen the comedy of *The Jealous Wife* as much as possible on its first appearance, Garrick proposed that Yates should play the character of *Sir Harry Beagle*, instead of *Major Oakly*. For this purpose, on his first reading the play in the green-room, he embellished the character of *Sir Harry* with such an infinite variety of humour, that every body applauded it except Yates, who still requested the *Major* in preference. Garrick again pressed him by saying "what a fine character it was! how much in his way!" &c.; till Yates at last put an end to the controversy by saying, "If I could presume, Sir, on playing it any thing like you, would accept it; but as I know my own powers, I must beg leave to decline it." The event shewed that Yates was right both in his own judgment and in that of the public.

As another instance of his powers of re-

citation, the following fell under my own observation:—

In company with a friend to whom Garrick had promised some instructions in the character of *Macbeth*, I waited on him at his house in the Adelphi about eleven o'clock on a Sunday morning. After some preliminary conversation, Garrick took up the play; and read several passages with a taste, feeling, and discrimination, *new* even to me, who had seen him so often in this character on the stage. But when he came to the dagger scene, I observed his face instantly assume a mixture of horror, perplexity, and guilt, which I thought it impossible for human nature to *affect*: the glare of his eye was conformable to the range of his features, and he went through the passage in a style totally indescribable. I then saw the amazing effect of his art; in which, like a great original in painting, the nearer it was viewed, the more the delicate and master touches of the pencil were discernible.

This event happened above thirty years

ago; and I now remember it with a sensibility which, while it affords me the most lively impressions, leads me to despair of ever "seeing its like again."

Monsieur Texier

Recited French plays uncommonly well; and introduced into his reading a particular manner, which gave his powers of recitation greater scope. This was, by never announcing the name of the character who spoke, otherwise than at the beginning of the play, or on the change of a scene. Hence he marked his *dramatis personæ* by the discrimination of his voice and manner *only*, and succeeded most happily. When complimented upon this talent, he replied with much seeming humility: "*C'est le petit don le la nature.*" (It is the trifling gift of nature).

Quin

Was reckoned to read Milton well; though Dr. Johnson thought him more an *actor*, than a *reciter*, of the poet. In the declamatory parts of tragedy, however, he had the approbation of the best judges.

John Henderson.

This very excellent performer piqued himself on his reading, and was much followed by the public. But the fault imputed to Quin by Dr. Johnson, was conspicuous in Henderson: he was too much an *actor* in the comic parts of recitation.

Hugh Kelly,

The author of *False Delicacy*, &c. read very musically; though with little or no foundation in science. His ear and manner alone carried him through with much satisfaction to those who heard him.

Isaac Bickerstaff

Recited in a voice so thick, and a manner seemingly embarrassed, as rendered him not only incapable of giving variety to his tones, but at times scarcely intelligible. In reading his comedy of *'Tis Well it's no Worse* (since cut down to the farce of *The Pannel*) to a small circle of friends, he laid most of them asleep, though just after partaking the hospitalities of his table.

Dr. Goldsmith

Read so slovenly, and with such an Irish brogue, that it was sometimes difficult to distinguish his poetry from his prose. He was sensible of this himself; and used to say: "I leave the *reading of my pieces*, and the *punctuation of them*, to the *players*, and the *printers*; for, in truth, I know little of either."

John Walker,

Preceptor in oratory (author of the *Pronouncing Dictionary*, and other philological works of merit), has shown himself well qualified for such a profession both by his precepts and example. In the recital of the sublime passages of Milton and our best poets, he has long been justly celebrated; and the Editor of these volumes once heard him read the Lord's prayer in a tone of such fervour and piety, as excited a wish that the powers of this impressive science might be more cultivated by the professors of our holy religion.

Frodsham,

The York manager, independently of his great stage qualifications, was a very fine reciter. He once introduced into a public lecture which he read at York, some observations on the liturgy; which he first exemplified by an imitation of the various styles mostly in practice, and then gave specimens of the manner in which many of the sublime passages of it should be read, highly to the gratification of a very respectable audience.

Dr. Johnson

Read serious and sublime poetry with great gravity and feeling. In the recital of prayers and religious poems he was awfully impressive, and his memory served him upon those occasions with great readiness. One night at the club, a person quoting the nineteenth psalm, the Doctor caught fire; and, instantly taking off his hat, began with great solemnity:

"The spacious firmament on high*," &c.

and went through that beautiful hymn. Those who were acquainted with the Doctor, know how harsh and repulsive his features in general were; but upon this occasion, to use the language of scripture, "his face was almost as if it had been the face of an angel."

CLXXXI. *Walter Ross.*

Foote having occasion for the testimony of Walter Ross, of Edinburgh, in some theatrical law suit, the latter (who was a *Scotchman*) travelled all the way up to town in a post-chaise under the character of *writer to the signet*, for which he charged Foote the whole of his expenses.

* This fine version of the nineteenth psalm has been generally attributed to Addison, from its being introduced under the letter C in the sixth volume of the Spectator, as well as from its moral and sublime tendency; and this opinion has been so prevalent, that the collectors of the musical miscellany have ignorantly given the words as written by *Doctor Addison:* but the real author was Andrew Marvel, the celebrated patriot, as appears by his posthumous papers; a man who added to an inflexible love of his country a pious and *practical* belief in the christian religion.

The cause, when it came to a hearing, was determined against Foote; and, as it was then said, on the incompetency of the evidence of Ross: which created some little coolness between the parties. Friends however interfering, they were reconciled, and dined together the day before Ross went out of town; during which meeting Foote asked him, in the course of conversation, how he intended to travel back. "On *foot*," said the wag, taking him in his own way.—"I am heartily sorry for that," said the other; "as I know of no man who more richly deserves *horsing*."

CLXXXII. *Haunch of Venison.*

Talking of the best method of cutting up a haunch of venison, Foote said "the best carver in the world was a man *who could cut up a haunch* dexterously, and *eat none himself*."

CLXXXIII. *Impudence of Wealth.*

A wealthy man from the city, dining one day at North-end, was every now and then

boasting, with all the insolence of prosperity, of his many thousands in the funds, his capital in trade, mortgages, annuities, &c.; when Foote cut him short by saying "he was very sorry for the circumstance."—"What!" exclaimed his guest, "do you envy me my prosperity?"—"No, my good Sir," said the other; "but you talk so much of your riches, I am afraid the company (who don't know you as well as I do) will think *you are going to break.*"

CLXXXIV. *Female Robbery.*

A lady of fashion having suddenly eloped to avoid her creditors, a circle of her former friends were, as usual, sitting in judgment on her character, and relating different anecdotes which fell within their respective knowledge. Among the rest, Lady Betty D—— was violently severe against her, for robbing her Ladyship of a *fine new set of teeth*, which she borrowed of her for the feigned purpose of getting a new set like them. "Nay," said Foote, "now Lady Betty, that's no such great matter after all."

—"What! no great matter, Sir, to rob me of my teeth?"—"Why, no; I really think not: for, at the worst, you know, it was only *biting* the *biter*."

CLXXXV. *Mr. and Mrs. Barry.*

The year after the season in which Mr. and Mrs. Barry drew such crowds to the Opera-house in the Haymarket, Foote engaged them to play at his little theatre. His friends expressing their surprise why he should pay such high prices for *tragedy* at his house, he replied: "Why, to tell you the truth, I have no great occasion for them; but they were such *bad neighbours* last year, that I find it cheaper to give them board and lodging for nothing, than to have them any longer *opposite to me*."

CLXXXVI. *Irish Humour.*

Foote always acknowledged the humour and *naïveté* of the Irish, and gave many instances of it in the course of his convivial hours.—One frosty day, he said, as

he was crossing the ferry near Dublin, a passenger was put into the boat quite drunk, who was at first very ungovernable. This occasioned many remarks: one said "how beastly drunk he was;" another, "that he ought to be thrown overboard," &c. At last the boatman, looking at him, seemingly with an eye of compassion, exclaimed: "Why, to be sure, good people, the man is bad enough; but, bad as he is, I wish *I had half his disorder about me.*"

CLXXXVII. *The same.*

Another time, dining at a public table in Dublin, where, as usual, the company were giving loyal toasts, a giddy young man of fashion, who sat by a Roman-catholic priest, was every now and then teasing him with such toasts as were not quite congenial to his way of thinking. The priest took no notice of it for some time, till it came to his own turn; when he very gravely asked his neighbour what was the preceding toast: —"The Glorious Revolution, Doctor; match it if you can."—"Was that a good

one?" asked the other, drily.—"Oh, most excellent!"—"Why then, my honey, I'll give you *Another of them.*"

CLXXXVIII. *The same.*

He used to tell a story of meeting an Irishman comparing his watch by St. Paul's, and bursting into a fit of laughter. Being asked what he laughed at, he replied: "And how can I help it? when here is my little watch, that was made by Paddy O'Flaherty on Ormond-quay, and which only cost me five guineas, has *beat* your big London clock there *a full hour and a quarter* since yesterday morning."

CLXXXIX. *Mrs. Clive and Mrs. Pritchard.*

These two celebrated actresses becoming latterly very corpulent, were one night performing the characters of *Lady Easy* and *Edging* in the comedy of *The Careless Husband.* In the part where the former desires the latter to take up a letter which is dropt on the stage, Mrs. Clive (who could

as well have taken up the monument) cried out, "Not I, indeed! take it up yourself, if you like it." This threw an equal embarrassment on the other; which the audience seeing, began to titter. At last Mrs. Pritchard, with great presence of mind, replied: "Well, madam Pert, since you won't take up the letter, I must only get one that will;" and accordingly beckoned towards the side scene, when one of the servants of the house came forward and terminated the dispute.

CXC. *Mrs. Gammon.*

This lady, who was very large and fat, walking on the Steine one evening at Brighton, somebody said, "Here comes Mrs. Gammon!"—"Who?" said Foote, holding up his glass at the same time; "only a *single gammon!* why, 'tis *the whole of the old sow herself.*"

He lived in habits of intimacy with this lady; but a man of wit never suffers such a circumstance to stand in the way of a *bon-mot.*

CXCI. *Edward Moore,*

(Author of the Periodical Paper called *The World.*)

It is rather extraordinary, that though this gentleman was totally ignorant of every language but his own, it has been universally allowed that few men wrote better in prose or verse, or showed more knowledge of the classics in applications and allusions to them.

The late Lord Chesterfield saw this singularity; and upon Mr. Moore's death (having a great regard for him), he undertook the education of his only son: when, by way of cultivating the *family talent* (as his Lordship called it), he carefully avoided having the youth taught any other language than his own native English. But the pupil, not having the difficulties which his father had to struggle with, nor consequently the same spur to assiduity, wanted, in all probability, the ingredients which contributed to form and enrich his father's mind. Hence he promised to be no more than a mere English scholar, without much